

Waldegrave to open up civil service

Private firms may bid for Whitehall jobs

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

SENIOR civil servants would face competition for their jobs from leading industrialists and thousands of Whitehall posts would be contracted out to private companies under plans heralded yesterday by William Waldegrave, the public service minister.

The privatisation of council manual services would be extended to professional services in both local and central government as part of a drive to break down the barriers between the private and public sectors.

Under Mr Waldegrave's proposals, companies would be allowed to tender for work done by civil service lawyers, engineers, accountants, architects and scientists. There are no plans to contract out the work of policy analysts for ministers, regarded as the backbone of civil service work. Senior government

sources said last night that it was too early to say how many civil servants might have to compete for their jobs.

Mr Waldegrave told an audience of business leaders that he wanted to let people from the private sector compete for senior Whitehall jobs, extending the arrangements for advertising posts in the agencies that have taken over some government functions, such as paying social security benefits. He said that complex issues, including pay, would have to be addressed.

Recalling that in the past, particularly in wartime, prominent figures had entered the civil service, Mr Waldegrave said: "I believe there is more to be done at the top of the civil service. The quality of people we get into our public service is very high. I do not believe they need fear much from having to compete with others."

He told his audience: "I would like to poach some of your people as well as you poaching ours. This is one subject I would like to see opened up." He spoke of achieving a "parity of esteem" between public and private sectors.

Mr Waldegrave told a conference of industrial and financial leaders organised by *The Sunday Times* that the government wanted a commitment to excellence in the public services equal to that of the most forward-looking private company. The Conservatives had reduced the state sector to a more sensible size and the aim now was to ensure that it performed better.

Mr Waldegrave foreshadowed what he called a revolution in the organisation and delivery of public services. At the heart of it would be a division in the functions of purchaser and provider of services. He referred to the request already made to government departments to subject their services to market testing and to compare their efficiency with that of the private sector. "The state sector used to be characterised by monolithic and monopolistic organisations that combined the functions of both purchaser and provider, and often of regulator as well," he said. "The result was not a happy one."

Compulsory tendering had helped to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of

many local government services. "Competitive tendering has worked and is working. And I believe it should now be extended. Until now it has applied primarily to local authorities' blue-collar services. I see no reason why it should not also apply to the white-collar professions. Nor do I see why competitive tendering should apply only to local government. I want to see it extended much more widely to central government services as well."

Mr Waldegrave said that improving public services would act as a discipline for the private sector because there would be increased expectations of both sectors. "Some independent schools are already looking anxiously over their shoulders at the competition from their grant-maintained rivals. Private hospitals run the very real risk of losing patients to the best of the new-style NHS. In the private sector at large, the need to satisfy increased expectations will have important implications for all your businesses."

Public servants were not the only ones with lessons to learn. "There are an increasing number of public sector organisations providing services that could put some private sector organisations in the shade. We should seek to learn from each other."

"I want you to join with me in breaking down the barriers between the public and private sectors. I want there to be a parity of esteem between public and private, based on the rival and complementary excellences of each sector."

Michael Heseltine disclosed his hands-on strategy yesterday for closer links with industry at the revamped trade and industry department but insisted he would not seek more money from the Treasury or embark on a vast expansion of his empire.

The president of the board of trade also warned employers that the average manufacturing wage rises of 8 per cent, almost twice the rate of inflation, was damaging Britain's competitiveness. By comparison, the increase in earnings in manufacturing in Germany last year was 6 per cent, in Japan 4 per cent and in the United States just 3 per cent, he told the conference.

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Off your bike: a policeman enforcing a ban on cyclists in Cambridge city centre yesterday, to the chagrin of countless students. Full details, page 5

Major cautions against too much optimism over Rio

By Martin Fletcher and Robin Oakley

AMID growing signs that the Earth summit could degenerate into an unseemly slanging match between industrialised nations and lobbyists for the developing world, John Major gave a warning yesterday that some people were expecting too much from the meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

Mr Major told reporters during a tour of southwest Scotland: "I am very keen for us to make progress generally at the Rio summit. But I have been warning for some time that some of the expectations for the summit are higher than those that can be realistically achieved."

Seeking to blunt criticism

of America at the summit, which begins tomorrow, President Bush called yesterday for the developed world to double its contributions to international forest conservation programmes to \$2.7 billion (£1.5 billion).

In an environmental speech in Maryland, he announced that America's contribution to bilateral forest conservation programmes would be increased by \$150 million to \$270 million next year, bringing total US aid to bilateral and multilateral programmes to \$518 million.

Mr Bush wrote to leaders of the European Community and the G7 industrialised nations at the weekend to seek support for what the White House portrayed as an important forest initiative. Officials indicated that Mr Bush hopes to influence discussions at Rio on a biodiversity treaty, one of the principal conventions prepared for signing at the summit.

At the weekend Mr Bush infuriated environmentalists by saying the US would not sign the treaty, designed to protect endangered plant and wildlife species and their habitats.

Officials portrayed yesterday's initiative as an alternative to that treaty, which the administration finds objectionable on two counts. They said it could enable developing countries to extract limitless funds from wealthy nations for preserving endan-

gered species, and could hinder the continued access of America's biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries to those species found in Third World countries.

A White House official said the administration's proposal permitted bilateral agreements between nations and offered a flexible approach. "Forest conservation is the key to preserving the Earth's heritage of biological diversity and harbours the secrets of new life-saving drugs and other products," he said.

Even before the US announced its opposition to the biodiversity treaty, environmentalists were accusing Mr Bush of putting America's short-term eco-

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Docklands cabinet split

Divisions have opened up in the cabinet over possible government action to save the £1.7 billion Canary Wharf complex in London's Docklands.

Strong lobbying for intervention to make the site more attractive for private sector investment is believed to have come from Michael Heseltine, the president of the Board of Trade, and Lord Wakeham, the Leader of the Lords. The prime minister, the environment secretary and the transport secretary are more cautious about involvement. Page 16

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Ambassador ordered out

Britain has ordered home the Yugoslav ambassador as part of the United Nations sanctions. Svetozar Rikanovic, a Bosnian Serb, was given 15 days to leave. "He's been doing a particularly difficult job quite well but basically, there's no job for him," said the Foreign Office.

Mr Rikanovic's secretary said that the meeting had been "very amicable. All of us are very sorry. He got 15 days which is rather a long time in such a situation." Page 16

Car window safety demand

A plea for safety measures to protect children from the dangers of electric windows in cars was made yesterday by the father of a two-year-old girl who was choked to death after being left alone in a family car for a few minutes. The call from Douglas Richardson, of Chobham, Surrey, was backed by the Consumers' Association, the AA and the RAC. Page 3

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Taylor wants drink-drive purge

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

A CRACKDOWN on reckless driving resulting in death with tougher sentences of possibly up to ten years in the worst cases were proposed yesterday by Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice.

After the recent outcry when he and two Court of Appeal judges refused to increase a three-year sentence on a driver aged 21 who killed a teenage couple, Lord Taylor said there was a feeling that the maximum sentence for causing death by reckless driving was not high enough. "Quite a lot of people do feel that taking a life or

more than one by driving recklessly, sometimes by drink or for the hell of it, ought in a bad case to be eligible for a higher sentence than five years." In his first interview since taking office five weeks ago, Lord Taylor said courts should have scope for higher sentences in the worst cases, possibly up to ten years.

As well as favouring a tougher regime for killer-drivers, the Lord Chief Justice indicated a reform which will be welcomed among penal reformers. He proposed an overhaul of the system of im-

posing life sentences, in which judges "behind closed doors" recommended the number of years a prisoner should serve for punishment purposes. Instead, Lord Taylor said, judges should state their recommended sentence in open court and prisoners should be able to appeal against it.

Sentences on drivers who kill have provoked arguably more outcry in recent years than those for any other of-

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Forced fatherhood barred in embryo case

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON



Stowe said she wanted to donate embryos

THE tug-of-war battles so beloved of Hollywood during the 1970s and 1980s are becoming passé. The 1990s real-life version of Kramer versus Kramer has divorcees fighting not for custody of their children, but for custody of their frozen embryos.

In a precedent-setting case in Tennessee yesterday, the state Supreme Court ruled that a woman could not have seven such embryos implanted into her or anybody else without her former husband's permission. No man, said the court, should be forced to become a father if he did not want to.

It is one of those bizarre legal cases that could emanate only from America. The fate of the seven frozen embryos, stored in a Knoxville fertility clinic, has hung in the balance for nearly four years while it has run its course. The embryos

were produced by a Tennessee couple, Mary Sue Stowe and Junior Lewis Davis, in December 1985 after nine fruitless years of trying to have a child by natural means. Early in the next year they divorced. Mrs Stowe, who is now 31 and remarried, at first wanted to use the embryos herself, and later said she wanted to donate them to another childless couple. They had a "potential for life" that had to be protected, she argued.

Mr Davis, who is 33 and also remarried, not only refused but vowed to sue for custody if she sought to use the embryos. At the first hearing in 1989 of a case that attracted worldwide attention, a Tennessee circuit judge decided the embryos were "children in vitro" and awarded custody to the mother.

In 1990 Tennessee's Court of Appeals overturned that decision, contending that the embryos were "pre-viable fetuses". It awarded joint custody to

Mrs Stowe and Mr Davis with the stipulation that neither could do anything with them unless the other agreed.

Yesterday's ruling, which could yet be challenged in the US Supreme Court, concentrated less on the status of the embryos than on the rights of those that created them. "Ordinarily, the party wishing to avoid procreation should prevail," said the judges, emphasising the lack of any sort of precedent.

That principle certainly applied if the woman wished merely to donate the embryos to another couple. The only possible exception was if the embryos were the only possible way the woman could achieve parenthood.

The court left the fate of the embryos up to the Knoxville fertility clinic where they have been stored since 1989. The clinic was "free to follow its normal procedure in dealing with unused embryos as long as that procedure is not in conflict with this opinion", it said.

PASSPORT TO France



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Life & Times
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THE KNACK OF BUYING

The most exciting way of buying wine in France is to deal direct with the growers. Robin Young explains how it is done

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TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

THE SCIENCE OF EATING

Frances Bissell, the Times cook, casts a discerning eye over the special relationship that exists between the French and their food, unmatched by other nations



THE ART OF LIVING

The European arts page will discuss the Henry Moore exhibition to be opened in Paris next week by the Queen and give news of an important discovery in a cellar



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'I got in touch with the DPP and said I was perfectly willing and available to give evidence'

Chief Justice offered to testify in Ward case

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gossforth, said yesterday that he had offered to enter the witness box to give evidence at the appeal of Judith Ward, convicted of the M6 coach bombing 17 years ago, but his offer was not taken up.

The offer by the country's most senior judge, unprecedented for a member of the judiciary involved in a miscarriage of justice, was disclosed by Lord Taylor himself in his first interview with a national daily newspaper since taking the post five weeks ago.

There have been criticisms that no one from the prosecuting team has given evidence at the appeal hearing, particularly to answer accusations over non-disclosure of evidence. The judges are giving their full reasons for quashing the convictions on Thursday and have said they will be free to draw "adverse inference" if not given a reasonable explanation.

"As far as I was concerned, I got in touch with the DPP and said I was perfectly willing and available to give evidence if required and I asked that to be conveyed to counsel for the Crown and the defence," Lord Taylor said.

The move signals the new era of openness and greater accessibility to judges that he wants to encourage. In particular, there is likely to be a visibly changed judicial attitude over mistakes, with judges presiding over the quashing of convictions expressing their regret in the most serious cases.

While that would not "do a great deal" for the person wrongly convicted, it "might show appropriate awareness of what had resulted from the miscarriage... and that is important," Lord Taylor said. Judges, he said, should be more ready to speak out and involve themselves in the machinery of justice. They should not "hide behind judicial independence" and a "fear of what might emerge if they do talk to anybody".

The Crown Prosecution

Service said that it had had a letter from Lord Taylor. However, the service did not seek an interview with him. "It was not considered that he was needed to discuss any of the matters that were before the court," Defence lawyers in the case would not comment on Lord Taylor's disclosure. Other lawyers said it was "incredible" that he was not even interviewed.

Lord Taylor, who as Peter Taylor, QC, was junior prosecuting counsel in the original trial, does not come to his new task of restoring public confidence in the criminal justice system unalloyed by the recent miscarriages. However, he acknowledges the case for reform although not personal culpability.

The Judith Ward case, he said, was a classic example of miscarriage of justice, and "one in which one feels very great regret. I can only say I have no feeling of guilt over what I did." He also rejects the need for stricter rules governing the disclosure of evidence.

The defence has argued in the case that non-disclosure of a wealth of material by the prosecution and a doctor led to Miss Ward's wrongful conviction.

Lord Taylor outlined several lessons to be learnt from wrongful convictions: first, the "tainted evidence from police confessions. The first thing is to inject into the training of the police the realisation that it is not only immoral but criminal to fabricate evidence." The sooner that could be remedied, the better, he said.

Second, there needed to be an independent forensic science service available to prosecution and defence. The practical drawback is that scientists were working "alongside police" from an early stage and if they were to remain neutral it required a high degree of professional independence.

Third, Lord Taylor said that from now on, judges would be "much more alert and vigilant to see they don't



Open court: Lord Taylor in his office yesterday, ushering in a new era of greater accessibility to judges

overstress the weight to be attached to police evidence". He rejected criticisms that judges had accepted police evidence at face value. "It has been said that the judiciary has been too ready to believe the police. That is a gross misrepresentation."

Most judges knew very well that the police did not always tell the truth, he said. "The judiciary does have to watch very carefully in summing up that there is no bias in favour of the police."

Other reforms he envisages to prevent further miscarriage of justice include a pos-

sibly expanded role for the Court of Appeal to order investigations, and a new independent committee to take over from the home secretary the job of looking at alleged miscarriages of justice and deciding which should be referred back to the Court of Appeal.

In many ways Lord Taylor does not differ in policy from Lord Lane, his predecessor. He does not, for instance, favour a sentencing council; or reforming the system of judicial appointments. But the sea change in his appreciation of the importance of

public relations. He is using the Lord Chancellor's press office on a daily basis; Lord Lane refused ever to grant a media interview.

Lord Taylor favours shedding wigs (but not robes), because this would "show an attitude of mind that was open to change and to modernisation". He also wants judges doing more to explain a sentence if it seemed "out of line" on the face of it. "Judges should not abstract themselves and go into purdah when out of their court, with regard to the way in which the courts are run and

the public is served." But the media also had a role in restoring confidence in the criminal justice system. "I am absolutely in favour of the judiciary being open to criticism by the media."

Tougher sentences, page 1

NEWS IN BRIEF

Code of rights urged for people in care

Ministers must draw up a minimum code of rights for all people living in residential care to improve the quality of a service that has been riven by scandal, the report of an independent enquiry says today (Jeremy Lawrence writes).

The matter is so pressing that local authorities should not wait for the development of such a code but should devise their own to ensure that residents' voices are heard, the enquiry chaired by Lady Howe says.

The enquiry into pay and conditions, set up by trade unions and employers to ensure higher standards of care, also calls for improved training and support for residential social workers to raise their status. Councils must set minimum staffing levels for homes, and build a positive image of residential care.

The report says little has changed since the enquiry by Lady Wagner in 1988 which found residential services in a "demoralised state."

Solicitors pay fraud levy

A special levy of between £1,500 and £1,800 is likely to be imposed on all partners in solicitors' firms in England and Wales to raise £50 million needed to meet a record rise in claims by victims of dishonest solicitors. The 3,500 one-man solicitors firms in England and Wales are also to be subject to two-yearly spot checks of their accounts by the Law Society in an attempt to prevent the widespread incidence of fraud. The need to raise £50 million, compared to £8.2 million raised last year, is a measure of the scale of the problem and what the society calls a worsening trend. John Young, Law Society council member, said: "We are not alone in facing problems of this kind. Other professions in Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand have all suffered from the activities of dishonest colleagues." *Law Times*, pages 25, 27

Reported crime rises

Almost a third of the 194,000 burglaries reported to London police in the past year could have been prevented if windows and doors had been locked, Scotland Yard said yesterday. Figures show that nearly 60,000 burglaries between April 1991 and March 1992 were carried out with no forced entry. Overall, burglaries rose by 10 per cent. The number of homes burgled without forced entry rose by 23 per cent to 38,500 and burglaries of commercial premises went up by 15 per cent. There was an 11 per cent rise in all reported crimes, to 945,300, and a 7 per cent increase in the clear-up rate, to 16 per cent. There was a 15 per cent increase in reported rapes, taking the total to 1,180. Over two thirds of rape victims knew their attackers. Vehicle crimes accounted for 240,700 offences, or 25 per cent of the total.

Soldier shoots himself

A young soldier serving in Northern Ireland shot himself in the head in front of several of his fellow soldiers yesterday morning. Gunner Darren Oldfield of 27 Field Regiment RA died at Musgrave Park hospital in South Belfast shortly after the incident at Bessbrook barracks in South Armagh. Security sources said Gunner Oldfield, who was 18 and from Stockport, Lancs, shot himself in the barracks while a number of colleagues were with him, but no crime was suspected by the police investigating the affair. The army also disclosed yesterday details of a death last week, when a member of the Royal Signal Corps collapsed during an official physical training session at Lisburn barracks in co. Antrim. Jonathan Edmonds, aged 22, from Clywd, died of natural causes.

Water bills 'too high'

Almost four out of ten consumers say that water charges are too high, although telephone bills are still the largest cause of complaint. A survey by Mori for Ofwat, the water industry watchdog, found that 44 per cent of 18 million households in England and Wales thought water charges fairly reasonable, although 23 per cent said they were fairly unreasonable and 15 per cent very unreasonable. Just 66 per cent were satisfied about the safety of water and 57 per cent said the taste was satisfactory. Gas prices were considered the most reasonable among the big utility companies with six out of ten of the 3,617 people interviewed by Mori saying they were fair or very reasonable. While 32 per cent thought telephone charges reasonable, 35 per cent said they were fairly unreasonable and 26 per cent very unreasonable.

Teachers oppose tests

National curriculum tests for seven year-olds, which have been slimmed down to minimise classroom disruption, are still opposed by the vast majority of teachers administering them, according to a survey by academics at Leeds University for the National Union of Teachers. The survey found that 96 per cent of staff involved in standard assessment tasks believed the educational benefits did not justify the upheaval. Almost all found their own assessments more informative than the test results. More than half of the sample of teachers from 128 classrooms in 89 schools in 52 education authorities thought the latest exercise had been a waste of time, and almost as many reported a deterioration in their pupils' behaviour during the testing period. Only 4 per cent believed that the time had been well spent.

Judge backs megaphone diplomacy

A HIGH Court judge yesterday granted locked-out members of the central mosque in Luton, Bedfordshire, permission to use "megaphone diplomacy" to serve notice of contempt of court proceedings on a member of the rebel group occupying the building.

An application to have Mr Haji Mohammad Suleiman jailed for breach of a court order that the mosque should be temporarily shared by the two rival factions is due to be heard on Thursday. Mr Justice Ferris said solicitors for the original mosque trustees, who are unable to gain entry to the building, need not serve notice of the application on Mr Suleiman personally.

It would be sufficient to pin notice of the "motion to commit" with copies of sworn evidence supporting the application, to the mosque door. Copies of the documents should be posted to Mr Suleiman and the terms of the notice read out by the trustees' solicitors through a loud hailer in front of the mosque in what the judge described as "megaphone diplomacy".

The state rescues that belie Tory free-market pledges

SUGGESTIONS of government assistance to prop up the failed property developers Olympia & York appear to be at odds with the non-interventionist stand the Conservatives have tried to maintain since 1979.

Close scrutiny of the record, however, shows that Margaret Thatcher's government did not always practise as it preached. When she took office she made clear that firms would be expected to compete in the open market. Yet during the early eighties hundreds of millions of pounds were pumped into ailing nationalised industries to make them more attractive.

Between 1979 and April 1983 the government put £1.23 billion into British Leyland to help retain its viability, according to Conservative central office. Other estimates put the sum spent on bailing out the company between 1975 and 1984 at £1.0bn.

The cash hand out — which provoked Norman Tebbit's infamous comment:

If Canary Wharf should get a helping hand the precedents are there to find, says Jill Sherman

"I stabbed them in the back with a cheque book" — were also dished out to British Steel and British Coal. Between 1975 and 1985, British Steel cost the taxpayer over £7.8bn in subsidies, while £1.7bn has been given to British Coal since 1979, including £66bn since 1990 in deficiency grants. In other cases, the government wrote off substantial debts in privatisation deals. National loans fund debts of £5bn were written off before the privatisation of Water Holding Companies, and the Rover sale to British Aerospace, with its controversial £44m worth of sweeteners, only raised £150m, after a government injection of £547m, according to the National Audit

Office.

There are few examples in the last ten years, however, of the government deliberately bolstering private concerns that were at risk of going under. The most infamous case was the failed De Lorean motor project in Belfast, where where £78.9m was invested from 1978 to 1982 before it went into receivership.

Professor John Bolton, director of the centre of business economics at the European Business School in London, said this misguided subsidy was a classic example of "sunrise industry gambling", where governments attempt to pick winners. Although popular with the previous Labour government, the strategy was generally avoided by Mrs Thatcher, other than De Lorean, which she inherited.

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Office glut to delay City plans

BY DAVID YOUNG

PLANS to redevelop the London Wall area in the west of the City of London to compete with new developments in Docklands are likely to be delayed because of difficulties in the commercial property sector.

Daiva Securities, the Japanese brokerage house, has denied that it is abandoning plans to build a new corporate headquarters in the area because of the current property glut. However, although design work has been completed on the project and planning permission granted, no date for construction has been set.

The building, which will be 12 storeys high with two basements, has been designed by the Richard Rogers Partnership. The company said that work would start once it became clear when it could negotiate a release from leases it holds on two other big London offices.

Several other developments in the area are at an advanced planning stage, but it is not known when building work will start. They include Moore House, designed by Terry Farrell, and 1 London Wall, designed by Sir Norman Foster.

Peter Webster, a City property specialist with surveyor Matthews Goodman, said: "These projects are certainly market-led. They will go ahead when tenants are found, but there are other projects also chasing tenants all over the City at the moment and the London Wall projects would offer over a million square feet of office space."

Two big developments that are almost complete are Alban Gate, designed by Mr Farrell and which has found a tenant for only 45,000 square feet of its 380,000 total, and 60 London Wall, built by Scottish Widows and designed by Fitzroy, Robinson and Partners. It has still to attract any tenants.

Hotels drop their room prices

BY ROBIN YOUNG

THE price of hotel rooms has fallen for the first time in ten years. Businessmen and frequent travellers, the main users of hotels, have seen the largest drops but the general public are also taking advantage of special deals and bargain reductions, according to a report published yesterday.

The average rack rate (normal quoted prices) for a single occupancy hotel room, including breakfast, VAT and service, fell by 1.03 per cent last year, the 1992 UK Hotel Tariff Survey prepared by Expedia Hotel Reservations for *Caterer and Hotelkeeper* and *Executive Travel* magazines, found. Information gathered from 246 British hotels found, however, that the most expensive hotels in London defied the trend by increasing quoted rates by 3.21 per cent. The most expensive, the Hyatt Carlton Tower, quotes £282 a night, more than £50 above the average for the five-star grade. The Westbury, the cheapest five-star, quotes £165.75, with the average being £231.25 a night.

On average, tariffs for four-star London hotels have fallen by 2.1 per cent, with the Portman Inter-Continental the most expensive at £233.70 and the Hendon Hall the cheapest at £83. The Rembrandt was the most expensive London three-star hotel, at £105.95, with the Queens hotel the cheapest at £49. Three-star hotels at

Garwick and Heathrow airports reduced rates by more than 15 per cent.

Three-star hotel prices in cities including Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester fell nearly 7 per cent this year to an average of £69.09.

The report concludes that the UK hotel industry is still reeling from the impact of the Gulf war and "the lingering effects of the recession". Hotels had "reduced their rates and are adding value to woo the recession-hit business traveller and holidaymaker".

The fall in quoted UK rates contrasts with rises in other countries. Worldwide, the survey estimates that hotel tariffs have risen by just over 3.6 per cent, with Belgium showing an increase of more than 11 per cent, Spain over 6 per cent, Holland more than 5 per cent and France just over 3 per cent. The highest rises were in India, up 13.7 per cent, and the United Arab Emirates, 12.8 per cent.

David Gormour, economics editor at *Caterer and Hotelkeeper*, said: "The recession has instilled a heightened sense of realism in Britain." Mike Toynbee of *Executive Travel* said: "What is really interesting for us is that the hotels are offering much more in the way of extras, especially to encourage frequent travellers. Loyalty programmes to offer them special reductions have really taken off."

LONDON HOTEL BILLS		RISING HOTEL TARIFFS	
5 star	Hyatt Carlton Tower	% increase 1991-2	
4 star	The Westbury	INDIA	13.7%
3 star	Portman Inter-Continental	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	12.8%
	Hendon Hall	BEELGIUM	11.3%
	The Rembrandt	SPAIN	6.2%
	Queens Hotel	HOLLAND	5.4%
		FRANCE	3.1%
		GERMANY	0.3%

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Father appeals for safer car windows after girl is killed

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

THE father of a two-year-old girl who died in a car crash last night has appealed for safer car windows after the tragedy.

Lucinda Richardson became trapped after being left alone for a few minutes after the family returned to their home in Cobham, Surrey, after a weekend outing. Attempts to give the girl the kiss of life failed. Ambulancemen were unable to revive Lucinda on the way to hospital, where she was certified dead on arrival.

Douglas Richardson, 42, her father, spoke in public yesterday to underline how quickly his daughter must have become trapped in the powered window and called for action to prevent similar tragedies. "If Lucinda's death serves any purpose it could be to spur manufacturers to make windows safe," he said.

He described how the accident happened. "We had been out all morning and left the car doors open when we got home. Lucinda went out to play — we were only yards away indoors — the Fiat doors were open and the keys were in my pocket."

"After a few minutes, I looked out and saw her head in the passenger door window. The only thing I can think happened is that she stood on the switch with her head out of the window and panicked."

Mr Richardson, a company director of a transport business, and his wife Liz have three other children, William, nine weeks, Victoria, seven, and Laura, nine.

Mr Richardson said he had heard of two other similar deaths, one in another Fiat and one in a Vauxhall. Vauxhall has fitted pressure sensors to all its new cars which automatically prevent windows from closing if they

are obstructed, but Mr Richardson asked why other manufacturers were not doing the same.

Fiat last night said it was unable to provide an explanation of how the accident happened.

Windows on the Tipo will not operate without the ignition turned on. However, a secondary switch allows the windows to open and close if a door is open. Even then, the switch has to be depressed permanently to power the window to full closure.

Peter Newton, a spokesman for Fiat, said: "The electric windows conform to German standards, which all European manufacturers work to. We must express our profound sympathy but we cannot comment further on the details until we know the facts of this case." He said that he did not know of any other similar cases involving Fiat cars.

Consumer groups have been worried about the safety of electric windows for some years. Four years ago, Mark Swinnow, then aged three, had to be rescued when he was trapped in the electric

window of the family's Ford Sierra.

The Consumers' Association is calling for the compulsory fitting of safety devices to prevent drivers and passengers, particularly children, getting trapped in electric windows which are powered to close tight into the door frame. The association wants pressure sensors fitted to all cars with electric windows as standard.

The Automobile Association and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents are also urging action from manufacturers, although both stress that young children should not be allowed to play alone inside cars.

An inquest will be opened today at St Peter's hospital, Chertsey, although evidence from traffic police who examined the 1989 Fiat Tipo is unlikely to be heard. An inspection report will be sent later to the Surrey coroner.

Lucinda Richardson's death could force manufacturers to introduce new safety equipment on electric windows in cars. The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders is to examine the details of the accident to decide whether the case warrants major changes.

Car makers are, however, already moving towards improving conventional electric window systems. Rover's new 800 executive model has pressure sensors which detect an obstruction in the window and prevent them from closing. All other models work with a conventional button which has to be depressed fully to open and close windows.

Among the other big car manufacturers, pressure cuts are generally fitted only to top-of-the-range models. These include BMW, Mercedes's S-Class range and Renault's A610 sports model.



Richardson: told of two similar car accidents



Blast aftermath: the remains of a house in Monkseaton, Tyne and Wear, after an explosion yesterday. Loreen Harland, 72, who was in her bathroom at the time of the explosion, was rescued from the rubble suffering from shock and smoke inhalation. She died later in hospital from a suspected heart attack. A plumber who was working on her central heating system was trapped for 20 minutes before rescuers pulled him from the debris. He escaped unhurt but was also taken to hospital suffering from shock.

Halford tells of years of misery

By RONALD FAUX

ALISON Halford found herself "between a rock and a hard place" when she took over as an assistant chief constable in Merseyside, she told an industrial tribunal in Manchester yesterday.

Giving evidence for the first time, Miss Halford, who is claiming sex discrimination by senior police and the home secretary, recalled her relationships with Kenneth Oxford, then Chief Constable of Merseyside, and his deputy, John Burrow. She said that after a "honeymoon" period during which Mr Oxford had been kind and supportive, his management style changed to one she had never before experienced. He had been nice to her in the first few months and horrible to others. Then he became more horrible to her, she said.

"He was exceptionally abrasive, aggressive, dogmatic, demanding and, I suppose, outright rude to all my colleagues, including John Burrow. To belittle one's deputy in front of a new person must have caused Mr Burrow enormous embarrassment," she said.

Miss Halford, 52, alleges sex discrimination against Sir Philip Myers, HM Inspector of Constabulary.



Halford: found herself in "no-win situation"

James Sharples, Chief Constable of Merseyside, Northamptonshire Police Authority, and the home secretary, after nine unsuccessful attempts to win promotion. The three candidates she beat for the Merseyside post in March 1983 had all since achieved promotion beyond assistant chief constable, she said.

She told the tribunal that she discovered that Mr Oxford did not like things written down. She had once sent him a memo asking for written authorisation to investigate buying a computer system for the personnel department. He replied with a note saying: "This is not my management style. You have received my instructions."

She said that when she first met Mr Burrow, whom she succeeded as an assistant chief constable, he had looked unimpressed. He had been an uneasy man to work with because he had difficulty in relating to her, and had been defensive. "Maybe he felt threatened, and at times he was very hostile," Miss Halford said.

When she took over his area of command on the project team, members of which had been expecting promotion, "I found myself between a rock and a hard place. I was a no-win situation," she said. Her superiors had seen her as trying to change the world. "But I was not. Obviously, I did not get off to a good start."

Questioned by Eldred Tabachnik, QC, her counsel, Miss Halford described her progress through the ranks in the Metropolitan Police, where she became a chief superintendent, having attended three courses for "fast track" candidates at the

Bramshill Police College. Mr Tabachnik referred to several reports on Miss Halford by senior officers in the Metropolitan Police, praising her abilities, personality, and potential, but including one which expressed doubts about her "occasional feminine unorthodoxy".

The case continues.

Bustline is back to boost bra sales

By ROBIN YOUNG

A RETURN to fashion of the bustline has boosted the sale of brassieres by almost a fifth in the past three years, according to the market researchers, Mintel.

Women spent £388 million in 1989 on 71 million bras. By last year expenditure had increased to £450 million with 84 million bras bought.

Moir Paterson, Mintel's market analyst, said: "There has been a swing towards the underwired bra. The Gossard Wonderbra, originally launched in 1968, has recently enjoyed a tremendous boost in sales."

Busts are also getting bigger, according to Mintel's survey of the lingerie market. Ten years ago the average size was 34B. Now manufacturers report the average is 36C, and some are introducing cup sizes up to FF. Miss Paterson said: "This growth is partly explained by trends towards more exercise and the increasing use of the pill."

Most feminine underwear is bought by younger age groups, with teenagers buying the most lingerie and nightwear. Bodystocks and suspender belts are most popular with those aged from 20 to 24. Those over 45 buy more slips than average. Corsets are only of concern to those over 55.

Mintel estimates that in 1991, women spent £13.365 million keeping their lingerie up to date. The researchers expect the demand to slacken, though, as demographic changes reduce the proportion of younger women in the population, while the 35-44 age group expands.

Lingerie (Mintel, 18-19 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HE; £295)

Coroner wants change in virus rules

By ALISON ROBERTS

A CORONER called yesterday for a change in the guidelines on notifying parents about infectious diseases after the death of a boy who contracted meningitis. The health authority had told the boy's head teacher not to notify parents about a previous case, to avoid spreading panic.

Luke Batchelor, 10, of Milton Keynes, died from meningococcal meningitis on May 12. He was the third child to contract the disease on the housing estate where he lived and the second to come down with the infection at his school. He died within 38 hours of falling ill.

Sir Montague Levine, the coroner, said at Southwark Coroner's Court: "By May 11 we have a third case and, instead of thinking in terms of influenza, parents might have been thinking in terms of meningococcal meningitis." The health department said later that it would consider Sir Montague's views.

Anthony Perkins, head teacher of Luke's school, told the inquest that he was told about a pupil who was taken into hospital on February 14 and recovered from meningitis. "I was told not to tell parents and not to cause alarm and panic. What I had been told previously led me to believe it was extremely unlikely another child could contract it. I was told if there was another case it would become more serious."

A boy aged five was taken into hospital four days later and he too recovered. Mr Perkins was not told about that case. On the day that Luke fell ill, Mr Perkins sent a letter to parents telling them to look out for symptoms of meningitis.

Clare Strong, of Milton Keynes public health department, said national guidelines recommended that parents should only be told in the event of a second outbreak in the same school. However, Tom Osbourne, representing the Batchelor family, said: "Child contact at a school where children are playing, fighting, rolling around together and spending six hours together in a classroom is probably a closer relationship than at home."

Officer's wife 'killed by lover'

By PETER VICTOR

A WOMAN member of the Ulster Defence Regiment duped the wife of her officer lover into taking a walk in the forest, cut her throat and left her to die, a court was told yesterday. Susan Christie was then said to have run distraught from the scene of the crime, claiming she and her victim had been attacked in the forest.

Miss Christie denies murdering Penny McAllister, 24, at Drumkeeragh Forest, near Ballynahinch, Co Down, on March 27 last year. Her plea of guilty to manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility was not accepted.

John Creaney, QC, for the prosecution, told Downpatrick Crown Court that Miss Christie became friendly with Miss McAllister's husband, Duncan, an operations officer with the Royal Signals Regiment, when she joined a sub-aqua club he led. Although they had regular sexual intercourse, Captain McAllister made it clear he had no intention of leaving his wife.

Mr Creaney said Miss Christie met Miss McAllister by arrangement to walk their dog although Miss Christie did not take hers. She was seen leaving the forest "in a distraught condition" and told some boys that she and her friend had been attacked. However, examination of the scene showed the attack was different from that claimed by Miss Christie. The case continues today.

'Sin bins' prison policy condemned

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE practice of using isolated prisons as "sin bins" to hold disruptive prisoners other than to take to jail is condemned in two reports today.

The practice leads to prison regimes putting too much emphasis on control and punishment and causes frustration among prisoners because they receive few family visits, the reports by the chief inspector of prisons said.

Conditions designed for punishment can produce macho behaviour in staff and inmates where confrontation is the only satisfaction. Judge Tummim says in reports on Dartmoor and Camp Hill prisons. At Camp Hill, on the Isle of Wight, he criticises excessive use of the body belt which he suggests indicates that it is being used outside the guidelines.

Dartmoor is facing its last chance to change and is not to be treated as a penal desert for troublemakers from other jails. Judge Tummim says. Lifters who cause trouble in other jails are transferred to Dartmoor, with 11 out of thirteen lifters transferred in the six months to last June being sent there because of misbehaviour.

"Over two centuries Dartmoor has developed as a prison for punishment rather than as a place where prisoners serve their time as punishment. This emphasis is ingrained in the dominant staff culture. Other prisons have been happy to use it as a receptacle for difficult men," the report of an inspection

held a year ago says. There had been changes but the overall impression was of a jail out of time, with not enough managers capable of seeing through change.

Judge Tummim is critical of negative attitudes among staff at the jail and says that the prison service must not underestimate the resistance to change among diehard prison staff.

Many people in senior jobs at the jail showed signs of being worn out by the prison's traditional culture, the report says. It calls for the bathhouse to be shut because of its deplorable condition and says there is a risk of disease from inmates using the same brush to wash utensils and clean out slop sinks. The opportunities for physical recreation and physical education were the worst the inspectors had seen at a Category B prison.

Camp Hill, a Category C prison, was used to house inmates who had been difficult at other establishments, a separate report by Judge Tummim said. It had an unfortunate role as a "sin bin". During the inspection a year ago, more than half the 440 prisoners had been sent there for disciplinary reasons.

Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, said that the proportion of prisoners who needed control at Camp Hill was being reduced and that it should not be regarded as a sin bin. He ruled out making Dartmoor into a community prison.

Cuckoos pick and choose a home from home

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

CUCKOOS, famed for their skilled squawking and generally anti-social behaviour, are more choosy about the nests in which they lay their eggs than many people may suppose.

British scientists suspect that female cuckoos might be programmed to lay eggs in the nests of the same species of birds in which they were raised as chicks. Thus, if a female chick was raised by a meadow pipit she is more likely to lay her eggs in an unsuspecting meadow pipit's power nest next year.

The theory is among ideas being developed by Nick Davies, Michael Brooke and Will Duckworth in the zoology department at Cambridge University. They are testing the theory by offering bird watchers

£150 for reporting sightings of nesting cuckoos.

British cuckoos can lay at least three different kinds of eggs each tailored to deceive mainly reed warblers, meadow pipits or hedge sparrows. They are also known to lay in the nests of robins and pied wagtails.

The researchers are attempting to test their ideas that different strains of cuckoos could be programmed to lay in different birds' nest by studying young cuckoos' mitochondrial DNA, genetic material carried in tiny structures inside cells but outside the nucleus. The mitochondrial DNA comes only from the mother.

If the scientists can establish that the mitochondrial DNA in cuckoo chicks is different, that could strengthen the theory that preferences for certain nests is being

passed down by mothers to their offspring. It could also indicate that instead of different strains of cuckoos, Britain has three different species.

Sightings of nestling cuckoos will this year be followed up by a visit to the nests where the researchers will take a blood sample from a cuckoo chick for genetic analysis under licence. The work is part of studies at Cambridge into the cuckoo's way of deceiving other birds to raise its young at the expense of the birds' own eggs and chicks.

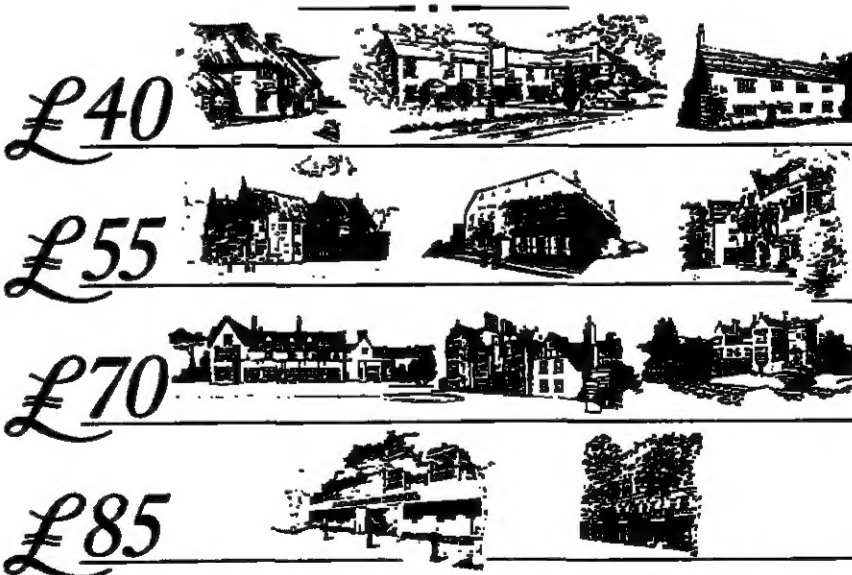
The research indicates that a constant battle is being waged between the cuckoo and its victims who, over time, may evolve ways of recognising the alien cuckoo's egg and take appropriate action. As a result, the cuckoo also needs to evolve to exploit other species of birds if it is to

continue to play its parasitic game. Such evolutionary tension may explain why cuckoos who lay eggs in meadow pipit and reed warblers' nests need to closely mimic the hosts' eggs in colour and size. Cuckoos that exploit hedge sparrows lay eggs bearing little resemblance to the hosts.

That is because strains of cuckoos evolved to exploit hedge sparrows are more recent additions to nature than strains that exploit the other two species. Consequently, hedge sparrows have yet to evolve ways of detecting an alien egg and the cuckoos have to make less effort to deceive.

News of the research comes as bird-watchers were seeking further sightings of two rare visitors to Britain, a lesser kestrel and an American white-throated sparrow.

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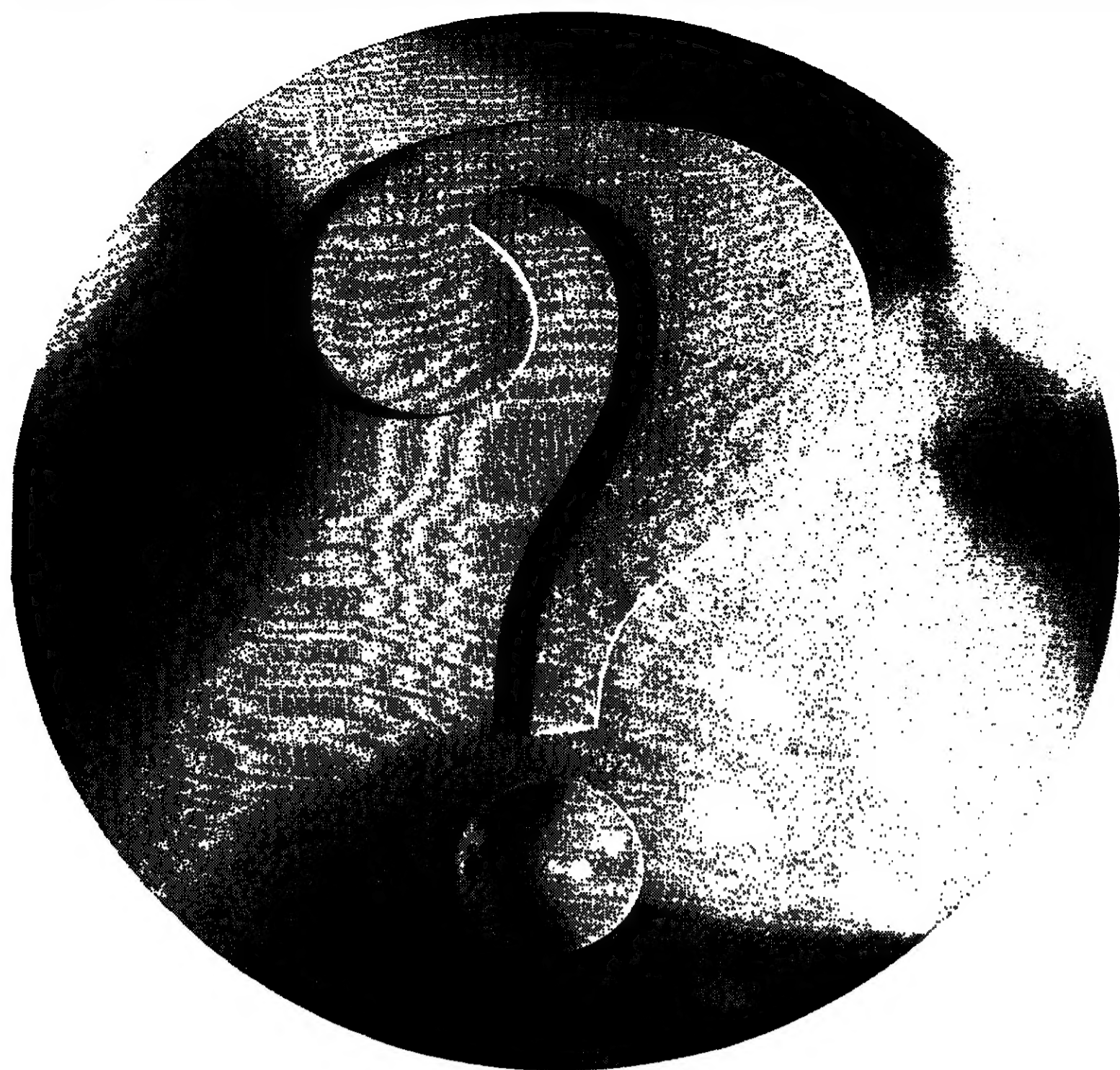
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Fatty foods blamed for unhealthy child diets

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A DECADE of campaigning for healthy eating has made no impact on children's diets, according to a survey published today.

Nutritionists at Newcastle University have found that boys of 11 and 12 get 39 per cent of their energy from fat, and girls 40 per cent, compared with 35 per cent recommended by the government and 30 per cent by the World Health Organisation. Research carried out by the same team in 1980 showed exactly the same levels.

The latest results are published in a report by the School Meals Campaign, advocating new nutritional guidelines for school catering. Government standards were abolished 12 years ago. Tim Lang, the director of Parents for Safe Food, one of 54 groups involved in the campaign, said: "The £660 million spent on food advertising every year goes overwhelmingly on fatty and sugary foods, whose sales have exploded. It is very bad news for the health of young people."

The report says that school dinners provide the main meal of the day for many children. The numbers arriving at school without breakfast have more than doubled in nine years, and more of those taking school meals have only snacks in the evening.

A series of reports has registered concern over children's diets. A study in Kent found 11-year-olds low in iron and calcium, another in Nottingham found that fewer than half the packed lunches in schools included fruit, while a third in London recorded a fall in micronutrient levels.

Issy Cole-Hamilton, dietitian and co-author of today's report, said school meals should make an "important nutritional contribution to improving the diets of British school children at a time when the service is threatened with cutbacks and increasing research confirms the poor

nutritional quality of many children's diets."

Two comprehensive schools discriminated against Asian children when allocating places, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) reports today. A requirement to submit detailed applications was illegal and unfair to Asians who had difficulty writing English.

Commission investigators found non-Asian children were almost twice as likely to win places at the boys' and girls' grammar schools in Watford, Hertfordshire, which have since become grant maintained. They blamed "indirect discrimination", and not prejudice.

The CRE urged John Patten, the education secretary, to ensure that Asian parents had a real choice of schools by making authorities monitor pupils' ethnic background. Michael Day, the commission's chairman, said: "It is unacceptable that parental choice should be conditional on the ability to write English and on familiarity with the system."

Robert Evans, head of Watford Boys' Grammar, said the school would study the CRE's recommendations. Children are being forced to put up with excruciating pain in hospital that would not be tolerated by adults because doctors and nurses mistakenly believe they could become addicted to powerful painkillers (Jeremy Laurence writes).

Large numbers of children are also being made to suffer unnecessarily after surgery because of the widespread myth among junior medical staff that recovery is quicker without painkilling drugs and that very young children don't feel pain.

Children who are given drugs for their pain get better quicker and go home sooner, according to the charity Action for Sick Children. Yet in one study 25 children undergoing surgery received only 24 doses of painkillers while 18 adults received 671 doses.



Tangled up: Joseph Sharp, aged four, of Hythe, Kent, one of Britain's youngest arthritis sufferers, tries to help the Duchess of Roxburghe at the launch in London yesterday of a sponsored "kni-in" to raise money for research and treatment of rheumatic disease

Ban on bicycles in Cambridge angers students

A county council has turned its growing population of cyclists into pedal pushers to fight congestion, Nicholas Watt writes

A BAN on cycling introduced yesterday in Cambridge city centre was greeted by arguments and discontent among students. Outside Senate House, which undergraduates usually pass on their way to lectures, cyclists reluctantly got off their bikes as a policeman informed them of the ban.

"I find the ban absolutely staggering," Sarah Brice, a medical student at Gonville and Caius College, said. "In the very week that would lead to the Earth in Rio the council here is banning people from using muscle power. The police never patrolled the ban on cars and yet they are watching over cyclists."

The 18-month experimental ban, which also covers all vehicles except the most severely disabled motorists, is in force from Mondays to Saturdays from 10am to 4pm. The scheme is part of Cambridgeshire County Council's £150,000 traffic plan for the city. Automatic barriers will be put up if the experiment works but for the moment cyclists are halted by wooden bollards, iron gates and numerous signs.

Sidney Street from Bridge Street to the junction with St Andrew's and Hobson Street is to be closed. St John's Street and Trinity Street will be closed to all motor vehicles except for those of permit holders, as will the lanes around the market square between Sidney and Trinity Streets.

By yesterday afternoon, cyclists had ripped down some of the signs and vandals damaged one of the gates.

Ms Brice said that the ban was particularly unfair to colleges in the city centre. "It is very expensive for them to arrange for deliveries before or after the ban. The council has been very crafty in introducing the ban during the summer when students are buried away working for exams. When all the new students come next October they'll just assume it is the norm."

As the occasional cyclist sped past the lone policeman patrolling the Senate House bollards, John Hipkin, a Liberal Democrat councillor who opposes the ban, said: "In five minutes, I saw 12 cyclists ride past a barrier. The ban is unenforceable and I have watched the law being flouted. Banning bikes from the centre of Cambridge is like banning gondoliers from Venice."

Tony Carter, the county council's Labour transport spokesman who devised the scheme, said: "We've seen businesses die off in the centre of the city because of traffic congestion. Time will tell whether this experiment works but I am sure that within 18 months people will automatically get off their bikes at the barriers. The ban is part of our transport strategy for the whole city and we are looking beyond just the student vote."

Julia Allen was one of those told by a policeman to dismount. She was visibly angered by the request. "This scheme is crazy. I will take up more room pushing my bike and the ban will also add more time to my journey."

Donald Broom, professor of veterinary medicine at St Catharine's College, said: "This is going to make life very difficult for thousands of people. We should be encouraging people to cycle. There have been lots of protests and many signatures have been collected."

There was, however, some support for the scheme. Alexander Schulenburg, a postgraduate student at Sidney Sussex College, said: "Cambridge really needs the new traffic scheme. Bikes are dangerous in such a small city centre where they go much faster than cars. People need to realise that pushing their bikes will not add much time to their journey. I am from Nuremberg, which is one of the most pedestrianised cities in Europe, and it is such a pleasant place to live."

Photograph, page 1
Leading article, page 13

Laird wins round in right of way fight

A wealthy Scottish landowner has won a court appeal which could put a neighbouring crofting family out of business.

The victory, announced in a written judgment, is the latest move in a right of way battle between Sir Patrick Grant and his wife Carolyn of Tornintoul House at Strathnairn, near Inverness, and their neighbours David and Angus Cameron. Sir Patrick wants to close the Camerons' farm nursery and says that his weekends at his Highland retreat are being disturbed by nursery customers.

He claimed rights of access had been granted only to Mr Cameron and his family, not to the general public, and gained an interim sheriff's interdict preventing the public from using the road.

Because of the ban, the nursery was closed a few weeks after opening in October 1990. Three months later, that ruling was overturned on appeal by Sheriff Principal Ronald Bennett in Inverness Civil Court, who said the Camerons could use the road for all purposes.

The nursery was reopened and Sir Patrick went back to court claiming in new arguments that the Camerons did not have planning permission for the nursery and were enticing the public to trespass on his land and put his livestock at risk. The fresh arguments were disallowed by Sheriff Booker-Milburn and the Camerons continued in business.

Sir Patrick lodged an appeal against that decision, which was heard in Inverness Civil Court last week. In a written judgment the sheriff principal has upheld the appeal and ordered a full legal debate on the case.

Turk jailed for wife murder

An illegal immigrant from Turkey was jailed for life after pleading guilty at the Old Bailey yesterday to murdering his Irish wife because she would not conform to traditional Middle Eastern ways. Hussain Kilic, 25, sat astride his wife Elizabeth, 20, and stabbed her with a kitchen knife 25 times, the prosecution said.

Kilic then jumped from a second floor window of his home in Lewisham, south London, fracturing his skull. He was ordered to be deported after serving his sentence.

Lightning kills village umpire

A lightning bolt killed the umpire of a village cricket match at Youghal, County Cork, during a thunderstorm. Several of the players were knocked down when the lightning struck.

The dead man, Peter Hill, 26, of Youghal, had been badly concussed during a football match at the same ground six weeks before.

World of water

A £4 million project to build an aquarium beneath the Forth rail bridge was launched. Undersea World, backed by private and public money, is due to open in March and will feature an underwater tunnel 112 metres long for visitors.

Waite in stone

A lifetime stone sculpture of Terry Waite, the former British hostage, was unveiled at Exeter Cathedral after months of work by David Price, a stonemason from Exmouth, Devon.

Student raped

A 20-year-old Oxford undergraduate was raped in a public lavatory as she tried to walk home alone from a party.

£10,000 fiver

A £5 note designed in 1797 but never issued is expected to fetch up to £10,000 at a Phillips auction in London on Thursday.

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New generation of products aimed at beating nicotine addiction could tap a £1bn market in Britain

Stop-smoking industry heads for boom

By RAY CLANCY

THE first of a new generation of products aimed at stopping smoking was launched in Britain yesterday, amid predictions that the anti-smoking industry could make more than £1 billion by the end of the century.

The nicotine patch, available only on prescription, cost £100 million to research and £100 million to develop in Canada, Switzerland and Britain and is to be followed by a number of other new products aimed at making it easier to cope with the unpleasant side effects of giving up smoking. Clinical trials are being carried out on a nicotine nasal spray and a nicotine inhaler and lozenge are being developed.

Organisations trying to persuade smokers to break the habit are worried that the vast sums being poured into the industry make consumers believe that the products are miracle cures. People are being advised to think twice before spending money on aids that have very low success rates.

Sandi Wilson, director of Quit, the largest charity in Britain dedicated to halting smoking, said: "This mega

industry has caught onto the fact that there is a vulnerable market out there. Nicotine replacement products may help with some of the symptoms of withdrawal but they do not address the psychological aspects of giving up smoking.

"Nine out of ten ex-smokers gave up without any formal help so at the end of the day

the role of these products such as patches is limited. Sheer determination and confidence is what counts and that is harmless and free," she said.

Ciba-Geigy Pharmaceuticals, which launched its Nicotinnal patch in London, believes that any new product that helps those who are addicted to nicotine is needed.

The patch is described as being simpler to use than nicotine chewing gum, its main rival at present.

Mike Findley of Ciba-Geigy said: "Every smoker who has tried to give up knows that the first week is hell and the first month very difficult. Research shows that people must want to give up and most do so through sheer will power, but others need some help."

The waterproof patch is placed on the skin and stays in place for 24 hours delivering a steady amount of nicotine into the bloodstream. Over the suggested three month period the amount of nicotine is gradually reduced, weaning the smoker from the drug at an average cost of £52 for a month's supply.

"We are not claiming that it is a miracle cure but we do believe it can help some smokers who need help overcoming their craving for nicotine and it is a safe and easy to follow product," Mr Findley said.

Since the dangers of smoking were highlighted on a wide scale 30 years ago, treatments have been split into

two classes: the nicotine replacement products and the alternatives such as hypnotherapy and acupuncture.

Martin Jarvis, head of the national addiction centre at the Maudsley Hospital, southeast London, said that the chewing gum had not produced high success rates because it was difficult to use. Smokers chewed the gum while they smoked cigarettes. They were not always able to get the necessary back up and counselling from their GPs.

"The patch is a new generation, the first of its kind that is simple to use with a guaranteed nicotine absorption rate so it does not rely on the patient regulating the dose," he said.

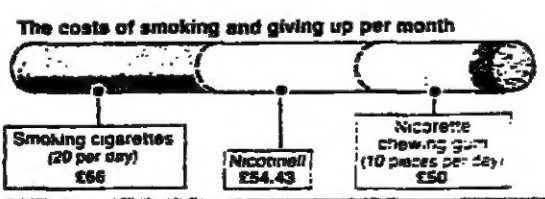
He believes that the patch, unlike the chewing gum, has the potential for a better success rate although smokers have to want to give up and nicotine replacement products alone could not work wonders.

Government statistics show that there are 14 million smokers in the United Kingdom, most of whom want to give up or have been advised to give up for health reasons.



Addicts' aid: a nicotine patch fitted to the arm

BURNING MONEY



Wind of change blows through the workplace

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

BY THE turn of the century, smoking will have been banned in all offices throughout the country, according to research which shows that 60 per cent of personnel managers already regard smoking as the biggest issue in the workplace.

A recent survey of 100 companies by IRS Employment Trends shows that just over half have a written policy on smoking while a further third have informal restrictions. Four out of ten employers completely ban smoking in shared or open-plan offices while two-thirds provide designated smoking areas although restrictions are placed on their use.

Some employers require smokers to clock-off before they light up while others insist that employees take work into the smoking area. Other employers restrict access to normal break periods.

Many employers rely on goodwill to ensure that policies are enacted but some have taken on "reserve powers"

to make breaches a disciplinary offence. As many as 15 out of 100 companies have had to discipline employees including suspending them for breaching policy.

In a pioneering case, a former employee of Ladbrokes, the betting shop chain, is awaiting an appeal to an industrial tribunal in Birmingham against unfair dismissal. The cashier, who worked for the company in Leamington Spa and who had nine years' service, was dismissed last year after challenging a ban on staff smoking in the customer area of the shop.

Forest, the pro-smoking group to whom she applied for advice, says that a number of staff throughout the chain are angry that Ladbrokes did not consult employees and that many are unable to take proper breaks to enable them to have a cigarette.

The ban, implemented 12 months ago, is against a background in which 59 per cent of Ladbrokes staff are smokers, according to the company's own research, while even more of its

customers smoke. The company would not comment on the case but a spokesman said: "Our policy is that staff behind the counter should not smoke. We are trying to position ourselves as the banks do. You would not expect to see a cashier puffing away behind the counter at a bank."

According to research by Forest, 31 per cent of companies have imposed a total ban on smoking, 13 per cent have introduced designated smoking areas with time limits during which they may be used, 44 per cent have designated areas with no time limit, and 11 per cent have taken no policy decision after examining the issue.

In 45 per cent of offices, ballots have been held while in 34 per cent there has been no consultation. The average notice given to staff of a ban is three months while in 16 per cent a ban was introduced overnight. In 55 per cent of offices, management have warned of disciplinary measures for breaches of a ban and dismissal applies in 13 per cent.

Marjorie Brady, of Forest, said: "Our opinion is there should be proper consultation with staff. Nor should there be hard and fast rules. Each working place is different. There is also a great deal of fear amongst staff that if they do oppose a ban they will be labelled trouble-makers."

Hilary Maxfield, director of workplace services at Ash, the anti-smoking group, said: "Smoking policies are becoming more and more common in offices and by the end of the century it seems reasonable to expect smoking will not be allowed except in designated areas."

"Management is realising it does have a responsibility for protecting employees from passive smoking. This is important because staff spend eight hours a day at their work stations and don't have a choice about doing so."

"We don't think ballots are appropriate. It's a health and safety matter. You wouldn't have a vote on whether to remove asbestos tiles from an office, would you?"

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Major...
at political
reforms
for Scotland

Collapse of Irish
talks averted

Short...
Just...
can...

Major hints at political reforms for Scotland

BY KERRY GILL

JOHN Major yesterday closed the door on a tax-raising assembly for Scotland but gave broad hints that significant changes in the way Scotland will be governed were on the way.

Mr Major, on his eighth visit to Scotland since becoming prime minister, said the "taking-stock exercise" on the country's constitution was well under way and that he would make more visits to sound out public opinion and to listen to the views of all Scots on how their country should be governed.

He emphasised in a speech to the Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce that there was no part of Britain for whom a strong voice in Europe was more essential than Scotland. "Scotland now has that strong voice precisely because Scotland is part of a United Kingdom that carries weight and authority across Europe."

Although Mr Major would give no details of the kind of changes he was contemplating, it is believed that he will strengthen the Scottish Grand Committee and reintroduce the Scottish Select Committee as a first step towards giving Scots more sense of self-determination. However, he added: "There are those who claim that Scotland would do better to stand on her own. They have never hidden the fact that for them separatism is the most important principle in life. For them separatism's potentially disastrous consequences are secondary details at best."

Scots had shown that they

rejected the separatist view. Nobody should imagine that devolution offered a "comfortable halfway house to anything". Mr Major said a second tax-raising parliament in Scotland would add to the cost of business and drive away investment and jobs.

Earlier, Mr Major had said in Galloway: "I said we would take stock of the situation. That means one has to consult and one has to consider what is happening at the moment."

It is clear that any changes are still some way off, although Mr Major does not want to be seen to be acting too quickly nor dragging his feet. "But I promise you there will not be any undue delay," he said. "There are a lot of opinions we wish to take and a lot of ideas we wish to think about."

The prime minister made plain that his top priority was to defend the union between England and Scotland. "But that does not mean that there are no ways in which government can ever evolve: improvements to government at all levels are always possible," he said, alluding to his desire for government in the 1990s to become more accessible and responsive to the people. "Where improvements can be made, in Scotland, England, Northern Ireland or Wales, we will make them. But with me you can be sure of this: I will not weaken Scotland, and that means I will not weaken the union." He would listen to all voices in Scotland, not only the loudest, he said.

Collapse of Irish talks averted

BY EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE collapse of the inter-party talks at Stormont was averted again yesterday by allowing a sub-committee further time to explore ways out of the deadlock.

An official statement released by the Northern Ireland Office said that the sub-committee, set up last week, would be invited to continue its work today before another full session of talks tomorrow. The committee was believed to have come up with ideas on how to keep alive the strand one talks — between the four constitutional parties in Northern Ireland — but had not come up with suggestions on the key moves to strand two when Dublin becomes involved.

The lack of progress in the talks has convinced many that the time is not yet right for serious negotiation on the province's future, which would require a willingness by both sides to make serious compromises. Sources from all parties concede that there has been no hint of a readiness to soften positions, suggesting that the future for what was the Brooke Initiative is bleak.

Official sources have spoken privately in recent days of the government having to re-draw its horizons and think not in terms of a two-year process but a longer period, possibly five years, involving several talks followed by periods of reflection.

That could be taken as a sign that Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland secretary, will not try to

push the process on to strand two before the unionists are ready, but opt instead to draw the negotiations to a close in preparation for a restart perhaps later in the summer.

Recent disclosures have helped to clarify the gulf which the process still has to bridge. The nationalist SDLP has proposed an innovative system of government for Northern Ireland based on an executive commission in which three elected representatives from the province would sit with commissioners nominated by London, Dublin and the EC.

The two unionist parties on the other hand have opted for slightly different variations of a more conventional model built around an elected assembly and an administrative or legislative committee, formed according to the relative strengths of the parties to the assembly.

The proposals highlight the contrasting views of the two key politicians at the talks. Jim Molyneux of the Ulster Unionist Party and John Hume of the SDLP.

Mr Hume aspires ultimately to a united Ireland but is increasingly of the view that the agency of the EC can provide the setting for a system of genuinely shared government between the minority nationalist community and the majority of unionists. Mr Molyneux favours a modest form of devolution for the province with emphasis on the administration of powers rather than legislating them.



True blues: Frank Sinatra takes a short break from his three-week singing tour of Europe to meet John Major during the intermission of one of the 76-year-old American entertainer's series of concerts at the Albert Hall

Ministers press lenders to speed home rescues

THE government will meet lenders today in an attempt to speed up the progress of mortgage rescue schemes, six months after they were announced.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, Michael Howard, environment secretary, and Sir George Young, housing minister, are expected to press the ten biggest lenders to honour pledges made in December to rescue customers facing eviction. Mr Lamont is known to be concerned that legal complexities are delaying rescue schemes and will be asking for quicker, simpler solutions.

Peter Lilley, social security secretary, and David Hunt, Welsh secretary, will also attend. The government feels that it has fulfilled its promise to pay income support for mortgage interest direct to the lenders and it now wants lenders to honour their commitments. The lenders will be pressing for the eight-month exemption on stamp duty to be extended beyond the August 19 deadline.

Anthony Nelson, economic

The cabinet feels building societies should honour the pledges made last December, writes Rachel Kelly

secretary to the Treasury, told a conference of building societies last month: "We look to you, the lenders, to identify workable solutions to the problems which have emerged with these schemes, so that you will be able to deliver the commitments you made last December."

The least successful, but most publicised, part of the rescue package announced in December were schemes involving housing associations. Mr Lamont said in Parliament on May 20 that seven schemes to convert mortgages into rents had since been established.

The schemes, whereby building societies offer reduced-rate loans for housing associations to buy properties from borrowers in arrears, have been dogged by

financial and legal complications. Because housing associations are charities, there is a danger in putting their assets at risk.

Mark Bolat, director-general of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, has repeatedly pointed to all the other initiatives that lenders have made, including debt counselling and accepting reduced payments. The council has refused to estimate the number of people who have been saved by other means, but lenders stress the reduction in repossession. Halifax, the country's biggest lender, says that as a result of its measures the number of homes repossessed between November and April this year has been reduced by 40 per cent compared with the previous year.

The latest figures on repossessions from the Lord Chancellor's department, however, showed that the number of court applications for evictions in February was almost the same as last year. Lenders started 13,781 actions in county courts last month, compared with 13,897 in February last year. Over a longer period, however, there is a decline in the number of homeowners facing court action for mortgage possession since the peak recorded in the summer of last year. John Wrigglesworth, housing analyst at UBS Phillips and Drew, has estimated that the building societies' measures may be successful in cutting repossessions from 280,000 to about 80,000 this year.

An article in the latest Bank of England quarterly bulletin argues that, in the short run, house prices respond more rapidly to reduced repossessions than to interest rate changes. The bank's economics division calculated that a reduction in repossessions by 20,000 for one year would increase house prices by about 5 per cent.

Business, page 17

MORTGAGE RESCUE SCHEMES			
Lender	Amount pledged (£m)	Housing associations involved & rescue target if specified	
Abbey National	80	Own scheme	
Woolwich	60	London & Quadrant, Circle 25, Metroplan	
Nationswide	150	London & Quadrant, Newton, Nottingham, Wates & West, Circle 25, South Bucks, Bourneville, Redcar & Pilsbury, Manchester & District, Circle 25, Western Challenge	
Northern Rock	20	Target: 3000+ homes	
Bradford and Bingley	45	Target: 1000 homes	
Leeds	100	Own scheme	
Halifax	100	Redcar & Pilsbury, Hyde, North British, London & Quadrant	
National Westminster	20	Target: 2000+ homes	
Countrywide	10	Own scheme	
Nations	10	Countrywide Churches Own scheme	
and Provident	20	Circle 25	
Paragon	15	Not known	

Families saved from debt

MR AND Mrs A live in west London with their two young children and are £40,000 in arrears. The couple and two friends bought their house with a £105,000 mortgage in January 1989. All four were

working and had a joint income of £62,250.

After six months, the two friends left. Mrs A became pregnant and serious arrears began to build up once she left work to have her child. Their second child was born in December.

Apart from Mrs A's child benefit, the family's only income is Mr A's £15,000 salary (£888 a month net). Their monthly mortgage payment should be £1,400. Mr and Mrs A decided to apply to become tenants of a housing association under Nationwide's Home Rescue Scheme.

Their home will be bought by Notting Hill Housing Trust with funds from Nationwide. Mr and Mrs A will remain in their home as tenants of the housing association, paying a monthly rent of £320.

Provided they keep up their rent payments to the association for three years, Nationwide has undertaken that any residual debt will be written off.

Mr B and Ms C, who have one child with another due later this year, bought their house in east London with a £59,000 mortgage early in 1989. They met their payments until Ms C gave up work when their first child

was born. They have made intermittent payments since.

They currently have arrears of £8,114, representing 14 months' payments. They have a monthly income of £1,090, including child benefit, but were unable to meet the monthly bill of £542.

Their home is now being bought by Newton Housing Trust and they will become tenants, paying a rent of about £200 per month. Provided they keep up their rent payments to the housing association for three years, Nationwide has undertaken that any residual debt will be written off.

An East Anglian couple with one child, a mortgage of £45,000 and arrears of £10,000 were not taken on by a home rescue scheme. Although they had sufficient income to meet their payments, they had made none in two years, instead using the money to improve their home, a former council house.

They applied for home rescue, but Nationwide felt that the couple had been irresponsible in the way they had spent their money. "They were 'won't pay' rather than 'can't pay' cases," a spokeswoman said. The building society is going ahead with repossessing the property.

Clark calls for action on cow disease

BY DAVID YOUNG

THE shadow agriculture spokesman is calling for the government to form an independent committee of scientific experts to publish a detailed report on the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow" disease.

Dr David Clark accuses the agriculture, fisheries and food ministry of refusing to give figures on BSE. "It has been extraordinarily slow in taking action to control the disease," he said.

However, the ministry said yesterday that it issues statistics at the end of each month, and that the latest figures show that the disease is spreading even faster than Dr Clark claims.

Dr Clark says that there have been on average 631 new cases each week so far this year, up 45 per cent from 1991. The latest ministry figures show that the weekly confirmed infection rate is now nearer 900. The ministry spokesman said incidence of BSE was expected to peak this summer.

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Scheme	Gross % P.A.	Net Equiv. % P.A.
Ordinary Account	2.80	2.10
Deposit Account	2.80	2.10
Flexible Savings Account (including full bonus)	4.13	3.10
TIMESAVER Account (£1 - £249)	2.80	2.10
(£250 - £999)	4.13	3.10
(£1,000 plus)	5.47	4.10
MAXIMISER Bonus Account (£1,000 - £9,999)	8.25	6.19
(£10,000 plus)	9.25	6.94
MAXIMISER Option 1 (Income)	8.05	6.04
	7.80	5.85
MAXIMISER Option 3 (Income)	8.75	6.56
	8.45	6.34
MAXIMISER Option 6 (Income)	9.80	7.35
	9.40	7.05
MAXIMISER Annual Account (£1,000 - £29,999)	10.55	7.91
(£30,000 plus)	10.55	8.18
(£10,000 - £29,999 (Income))	10.30	7.73
(£30,000 plus (Income))	10.55	7.99
MAXIMISER Tax Plan Account	8.75	6.56
	Gross % P.A.	Bonus Gross % P.A.
MAXIMISER Classic TESSA	9.00	+ 1.00 = 10.00
MAXIMISER High-Return TESSA	10.00	+ 1.00 = 11.00
	Gross % P.A.	Net Equiv. % P.A.
MAXIMISER High-Return Feeder Account	11.00	8.25

ACCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE

Scheme	Gross % P.A.	Net Equiv. % P.A.
MAXIMISER Income Account (£1,000 - £4,999)	7.55	5.66
(£5,000 plus)	8.45	6.34
MAXIMISER Growth Account (£5,000 plus)	8.75	6.56
MAXIMISER Top Rate Account (Income)	9.30	6.98
	8.90	6.68
MAXIMISER Two Year Bond (all matured bonds)	2.80	2.10
MAXIMISER Elite I, II, III, IV, V (Matured)	8.75	6.56
Elite VI, VII (Matured) (£1 - £999)	2.80	2.10
(£1,000 - £9,999)	7.25	5.44
(£10,000 plus)	8.25	6.19
Elite VII (£5,000 - £24,999)	10.30	7.73
(£25,000 plus)	10.65	7.99
Elite VIII (£5,000 - £24,999)	10.30	7.73
(£25,000 plus)	10.65	7.99
(£5,000 - £24,999 (Income))	10.05	7.54
(£25,000 plus (Income))	10.40	7.80
Premium Access (Issue 1)	6.04	4.53
(Issue 2)	6.13	4.60
Real Gold Account (including full bonus)	6.67	5.00
Extra Interest and Extra Income	6.04	4.53
High Income	7.80	5.85
High Interest	8.05	6.04
Acorn/Classmate	2.80	2.10
Overseas Resident Account	7.90	-
High Flyer Issue 1 (£1,000 - £9,999)	7.25	5.44
(£10,000 plus)	8.25	6.19
Optimum 2 Matured	10.65	7.99
	8.75	6.56
Summit Bond Issue 2 (£2,000 - £24,999)	10.30	7.73
(£25,000 plus)	10.65	7.99
Matured Bonds in the following issues - 1 Year Term Share, Summit Bond, 6 Month Term Share, Spa Bond	7.25	5.44
Super 90 (£1,000 - £24,999)	8.75	6.56
(£25,000 plus (Income))	9.80	7.25
	8.75	6.56
Spa TESSA 1	10.50	-
TESSA 2	10.00	-
	Gross % P.A.	Bonus Gross % P.A.
MAXIMISER Optimum TESSA	9.00	+ 1.00 = 10.00

Interest rates are variable. Includes 1% gross p.a. bonus. Net equivalents assume the current limit rate of income tax of 23%. For details of other accounts please contact your local branch. Interest will be payable net of the basic rate of income tax (which may be reduced by non-taxpayers) or subject to the required registration, gross. The actual net amount receivable by an investor who has not registered for gross income will depend upon the basic rate of income tax in force at the time interest is credited or paid out.

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مركز المناهج

Belgrade defiance tempered by first sanction worries

FROM TIM JUDAH AND DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

SERB-BESIEGED Sarajevo came under renewed artillery fire yesterday afternoon after two days of relative calm and only hours before a new ceasefire was supposed to come into effect. Two people were reported to have been killed.

The shelling came as more and more countries began to implement UN sanctions against the Yugoslavia of Serbia and Montenegro, and its politicians and military men continued to roar defiance at the world. Vladislav Jovanovic, the Serbian foreign minister, claimed that the West wanted to destroy the Serbian government by force and said that he had information that moves were afoot to install a "puppet government" in Belgrade.

However, General Bozidar

Stevanovic, the Yugoslav air force chief, pledged that, in case of foreign military intervention in Yugoslavia, the country would resist "to the end, to the very last". He said that anti-aircraft rocket defence systems withdrawn from former Yugoslav republics "just in time" were now redeployed around Belgrade and in a state of readiness.

General Stevanovic said that, while America and Nato had the capability to bomb Belgrade, he thought it unlikely that they would launch such an attack. The general's comments seem to fit a pattern of whipping up a mood of fear and defiance to rally the Serbian nation around President Milosevic. Yesterday Slobodan Milosevic hailed as a success the report that 60 per cent of Serbian

voters had turned out on Sunday in polls for a new federal parliament.

In Bosnia, Radovan Karadzic, the Serb leader, said "the Serbian nation (in Bosnia) is on the threshold of victory and of achieving its aims", and that Europe had to take note of this. Belgrade radio reported that Bosnian Serb troops had "eliminated" resistance in Sanski Most, and that in the town of Prijedor only a few "blinded Muslim extremists" had refused to surrender.

Despite such talk of victory the Tanjug news agency reported that Muslims in Bosnia were keeping "thousands" of Serbs in concentration camps, and that Serbs from Trebinje, close to the Croatian port of Dubrovnik, had to flee in the face of a Croatian artillery attack. Serbian-led Yugoslav army troops shelled Dubrovnik yesterday for the fourth day running. Croatian artillery responded to the shelling.

As sanctions began to be implemented against Serbia and Montenegro, more and more senior businessmen and captains of industry began to tell tales of woe, contradicting statements by politicians over the past few days that sanctions would have little effect. Slobodan Milosevic, the director of a highly successful import-export company, said: "Even at this hour the regime is gathering around puppet directors who tell tales about doing business with other planets and unknown countries... (In fact) all economic life will come to a standstill, and anyone who understands anything about economics should be quite clear about this."

Milan Kubat, the director of the large agricultural conglomerate called Novi Sad, said: "The same will happen to us as is happening to Cuba."

Petrol rationing is on the cards, and despite hopes that Romania could be used as a conduit for illicit oil supplies a cryptic report yesterday spoke of "certain disagreements with our Romanian partners" which have temporarily stopped the "Hero Pink" fleet from unloading at the Black Sea Constanta oil terminal. Serbia and Montenegro are believed to have enough oil reserves to last three weeks. Some 20 per cent of domestic consumption is produced locally, so the army should be able to carry on operations.

Radio Belgrade managed to find one piece of good news last night. It reported the arrival of an Aeroflot flight from Moscow.

Envoys to go, page 16

Cornered Milosevic retains his support

BY TIM JUDAH AND DESSA TREVISAN

THE election slogan of President Milosevic's Socialist party in 1990 was: "With us there is no uncertainty. We guarantee peace, security and prosperity."

Thousands of dead later and with United Nations sanctions now in place, President Milosevic of Serbia felt comfortable enough yesterday to crow that Serbia's opposition parties had just suffered a total collapse.

On Sunday, thousands of anti-government demonstrators roamed the streets of Belgrade chanting their "Slobo-Saddam" slogan. But, unlike the hapless citizens of that other international pariah, Iraq, Serbia and Montenegro did have the opportunity on Sunday to vote in, or boycott, a general election. The results are likely to show a strong vein of continued support for Mr Milosevic.

To a great extent, Mr Milosevic's support, especial-

ly outside Belgrade, comes from independent television and radio stations' inability to reach further than the outskirts of the capital; Serbia's enormously influential and state-controlled television and radio, on the other hand, broadcast to the entire republic.

However, Serbia's opposition parties are not the blameless victims of a "media blockade" as they try to present themselves. Throughout a year of war and collapse they have consistently bickered, changed their minds and, until last week, failed to present any kind of seriously united platform against President Milosevic. Their disunity has enabled the government to label them traitors and, as President Milosevic did again yesterday, accuse them of being in the pay of foreign powers.

The opposition parties have also failed to persuade most of the electorate that they have a convincing economic policy to rescue the republic from the grip of hyperinflation and plunging production.

Now, faced with potentially crippling international sanctions, President Milosevic is once again rallying the nation and appealing to statist fears of national encirclement, highlighting the image of plucky little Serbia standing against the evil foreign powers. The picture from Belgrade may look very different, however, when the traffic has stopped, the cash has run out and the factories are closing.



Milosevic: comfortable despite sanctions

US cash opens capitalist doors for discarded Soviet officers

FROM ROBERT SEELY IN KIEV

ON THE fifth floor of an adult education institute in one of Kiev's dreary suburbs, Captain First Rank Mikhail Korunov puzzled over a marketing questionnaire. Captain Korunov, who has spent most of his adult life in a Soviet nuclear submarine beneath the Pacific Ocean, is being made redundant as part of Ukraine's drive to shrink the 750,000-strong armed forces the republic inherited from the Soviet Union.

His evening classes are privately funded by an American-based charity and pro-

vide basic training in business for a small minority of officers. The course is the only one of its kind in Ukraine; the government has yet to finance a retraining programme. Captain Korunov, proud and polite and in his mid-forties, is one of tens of thousands of former Soviet officers who will be eased out of jobs once the most prized in the former USSR, but now seen as underpaid and carrying little of the respect they once commanded.

Faced with the closure of Kiev's naval academy, the captain had little choice but

to apply for the course, although faced with harsh competition from the more adaptable younger generation he is likely to be left unemployed and reliant on a tiny pension.

The 93 students, all senior officers with doctorates, are schooled for 144 hours in the rigours of the market economy, starting with basic introductions and extending to marketing and business communication. They feel a mixture of betrayal and lost pride at the hands of a republican government desperate to save money.

Those under 35 said they would gladly sell their expertise abroad if they could find the means to do so. Major Sergei Bibich, who holds a military doctorate and teaches tank and armoured personnel carrier drivers said: "I am willing to work anywhere in the world training soldiers to use Soviet military equipment."

Major Bibich said he could not even take night work in restaurants or as a taxi-driver because moonlighting was illegal. "I have two children and I do not believe that in five years I will be able to support them," he said.

However, Major Bibich is one of the luckier members of the course. He is young and has expertise that is saleable in civilian life.

He hopes to open a garage servicing the foreign cars of Ukraine's nouveau riche; finding out how the West works, however, is only the first of his problems. He cannot yet legally rent a garage because laws on property rights have still to be devised.

Loneliness is just one problem

And it is a fairly common problem for seafarers away from home for months at a time. But it is only one of the troubles that people bring to us. As a Christian society working among seafarers we are asked for all kinds of help—spiritual, emotional, social and practical. And we are there, ready to give all the help we can, in all parts of the world. To give this help we depend entirely upon voluntary contributions. Please help us to continue the Anglican Church's ministry to seafarers by a legacy, or please send whatever you can to

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Face of relief: a Bosnian girl, one of 61 refugees to flee the strife-torn region, picking up a meal from a Red Cross worker in Vienna

Bank chiefs pay for vanishing rouble

A shortage of banknotes in Russia has been compounded by the resignation of the central bank chief and his deputy. Mary Dejevsky writes from Moscow

GEORGI Matyukhin, the chairman of Russia's Central Bank, and his deputy resigned yesterday after presenting their annual report to the presidium of the Russian parliament. The full parliament had been due to hear the report later this week.

The resignations came the day after Yegor Gaidar, Russia's first deputy prime minister, had described the nationwide shortage of banknotes as "possibly the gravest and most explosive element" in Russia now and the one that could bring the government down. Millions of workers are being paid more than one month in arrears, if at all, because insufficient banknotes are being printed to make up government-agreed pay increases.

Mr Matyukhin and Vladimir Rasskazov, his deputy, had been under pressure for several months. Through the spring, the sharpest criticism had come from the radical government of Mr Gaidar, which charged the bank with threatening Russia's economic reform programme by relaxing controls on the money supply and selling credit too cheaply.

In the past two months criticism has been voiced mainly by the Russian parliament and the conservatives, who accused the bank of exercising too rigorous control over the money supply, leaving enterprises with no money to pay their staff and paralysing the system of payments in industry. Last month the parliamentary budget committee said that more than 72 billion roubles (6400 million at the market

rate) was outstanding in wage payments, and put the gross figure for inter-enterprise debts at one trillion roubles.

The government has met rising discontent over the cash shortage with emergency payments sent to particular trouble spots when strikes threaten, and has so far managed to fend off any outbreaks of unrest. When President Yeltsin travelled to southern Siberia last week, he took 500 million roubles with him to pay the salaries of disgruntled workers.

One candidate for the post of Russian Central Bank chairman is Boris Fedorov, a former Russian economics minister and known radical, who is now working for the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development in London. Mr Fedorov published an article in the Russian press last week criticising the policy of the Russian bank and suggesting that it was possible to do a better job.

The post of chairman may not be vacant yet, however. Mr Matyukhin and his deputy may yet be persuaded to remain in office.

Since the Russian bank absorbed the Soviet State Bank in December, confusion has reigned about its precise sub-

ordination. Government ministers said earlier this year that the bank was under the jurisdiction of the Russian parliament, and implicitly blamed parliament for encouraging it to squander money. Recently, however, parliamentary leaders have denied that the bank is answerable to them and say that it is jointly answerable to parliament and the government.

Mr Yeltsin, who is both head of state and head of government, insisted over the weekend that all officials and institutions are subordinate to the president. His remarks suggested that anyone who resigned had to submit his resignation to the president.

Mr Gaidar appeared to be trying to soften his remarks in an address to a conference of reformist parliamentarians yesterday.

Major battles for Euro-fighter

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major is flying to Bonn on Friday to meet Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, and will use the occasion to try to persuade him to keep his country involved in the four-nation, £21 billion European Fighter Aircraft programme.

Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain signed a development agreement and the prototype fighter is due to fly next month. However, Germany has hinted that it might withdraw from the project because of the cost. Britain, which carries a

third of the cost, would be badly affected by a German withdrawal. A decision will be made on July 1. Yesterday, the programme was raised by Douglas Hurd, foreign secretary, during a visit to London by Klaus Kinkel, his German counterpart.

In Bonn, Mr Major is expected to emphasise the importance of the collaborative programme for all four partners. About 40,000 British jobs are at stake. The German decision had been due this week, but Herr Kohl agreed to postpone it for a

month to allow Mr Major to make his case.

Erich Riedl, parliamentary state secretary in the German economics ministry, said yesterday that Germany would lose tens of thousands of jobs if Bonn pulls out.

A German government commission chaired by Volker Ruhe, the defence minister, who has hinted at his wish to withdraw from the project, completed a cost study at a final meeting last night. Alternative aircraft being considered by Germany include the American F18.

Denmark poised for 'yes' vote

Copenhagen: Opinion polls are pointing to a "yes" vote for greater European political union in Denmark's binding national referendum on the Maastricht treaty today (Christopher Follett writes).

After weeks of polls showing objections and supporters of the treaty running neck-and-neck, final surveys all showed a clear swing to the "yes" camp. The last Gallup poll carried out for Danish Radio News, based on more than 900 interviews, predicted a 53 per cent vote in favour and 47 per cent against.

A large majority in the Danish parliament supports the treaty, which the 12 European Community states are to ratify by the end of the year. Only in Denmark and Ireland are referendums being held.

Soccer charge

Paris: Jean Fourmet-Fayard, president of the French Football Federation, was charged with manslaughter in connection with the collapse of a stadium stand in Corsica last month in which 15 people died. (Reuter)

Eta chief held

Madrid: Spanish police said that Inaki Bilbao, a suspected member of the Euzkadi separatist movement arrested in the French Basque country, was the new leader of Eta and was wanted on murder charges. (AFP)

Child workers

Geneva: Hundreds of millions of children worldwide are toiling on the land, in factories or in brothels for pitiful wages, according to a UN report on the increase in child labour. (AP)

Carlos sentence

Paris: Illich Ramirez Sanchez, known as "Carlos" the Venezuelan-born terrorist, has been sentenced in his absence to life imprisonment for shooting dead two officers of the French counter-intelligence agency 17 years ago.

Dirty rat

Peking: Police launched a search for a thief who took a man's life savings of £1,000 in banknotes hidden in his home — and two days later found the money had been taken by a rat to live its nest a few feet away. (Reuter)

Broadway revels in revival of glitter

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN NEW YORK

IN A fitting tribute to this year's triumphant revival of Broadway, the theatre world has awarded the biggest share of its Tony honours to *Gypsy* and *Dolls* and *Crazy For You*, two musicals in the old New York tradition of glittering song, dance and romance.

The big exception in a season that is being celebrated as Broadway's most exciting for years was the award for best play and two other categories to Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*, an Abbey Theatre production from Dublin about five frustrated sisters in rural Ireland. Patrick Mason, who won an award for best play director, said he could understand why the presenter mispronounced the title as *Dancing at Lasagna*. He added: "The road from Ballybeg to Broadway is not an obvious one, and we have journeyed here from Abbey Street via the Thames Embankment and Charing Cross Road to 45th Street and Broadway."

Brid Brennan won the best actress prize for her role. Nostalgia prevailed in the musical categories. *Crazy For You*, based on a new book by Ken Ludwig and an old score by George and Ira Gershwin, took the best musical, choreography and lighting design. The new production of *Gypsy* and *Dolls*, directed by Jerry Zaks, won best revival director, and leading actress for Faith Prince, who plays Miss Adelaide. There was only a little carping among critics that the musical was really a remake of the Gershwin's *Girl Crazy*.

It may be a revival of a 1950 masterpiece, but as



Starry night: Glenn Close holds the trophy she was awarded for leading actress

the musical that romanticises the golden age of caddy gangsters, Times Square and Broadway, the new production of *Gypsy* and *Dolls* has been acclaimed as a symbol of the cultural revival of New York itself. As looters laid waste to Los Angeles last month, New York's editorial writers were pointing to the phenomenon of *Gypsy* and *Dolls* as evidence of new faith in their city.

Perhaps more indicative

of fresh native talent were the awards to two new musicals, *Jelly's Last Jam*, on the life of the jazz pioneer Jelly Roll Morton, and *Falsettos*, about a family living in both heterosexual and homosexual circles. *Falsettos* won for its score by the composer-lyricist, William Finn, and for its book by Finn and James Lapine, the director. "I love everyone in this audience and I'm a miserable person" said Finn, a writer of musicals whose off-

Broadway work dealing with homosexuality as a serious topic is believed to have delayed his wider recognition.

Accepting the award for best leading actor in a musical, Gregory Hines, who plays Jelly Roll Morton, thanked George Wolfe, the director and writer, for bringing a work about blacks to the American musical stage "that does not find us happy and dancing all the time."

After years of empty theatres and imported hits, a host of all-American productions are drawing near-full houses and earning the biggest profits in Broadway history. Frank Rich, the revered and feared critic of *The New York Times*, decreed that Broadway had probably shrugged off the curse of the British mega-musical.

"It may mark the end of New York audiences' infatuation with the West End aesthetic that places Euro Disneyland gimmicks above content," Rich said. However, one Briton, Mike Ockrent, could claim some credit for the revival as director of *Crazy For You*.

Hailing the vitality of the new generation of American playwrights, Rich said that by far the most adventurous and talked-about new play in London "is *Angels in America* by Tony Kushner, a New Yorker, at the National Theatre."

Rich's praise for Broadway did not deter Glenn Close from delivering a swipe at the critic when she rose to accept her Tony for best leading actress in *Ariel Dorfman's Death and the Maiden*. Cheers broke out when she noted that she had won despite a panning from *The Butcher of Broadway*, as Rich is known.

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Demjanjuk defence says 'Ivan' fled to Yugoslavia

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

"IVAN the Terrible", the brutal Ukrainian guard who oversaw the deaths of 850,000 Jews at the Treblinka death camp in Poland, may have escaped punishment and started a new life on the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia, the Israeli supreme court in Jerusalem was told yesterday.

In the closing session of the appeal hearing of John Demjanjuk, 72, the retired Ford car worker sentenced to death for being the notorious gas chamber operator, his defence presented further testimony yesterday, suggesting that he is the victim of a case

of mistaken identity. The new evidence, contained in 19 documents retrieved from Russian archives, consists of KGB interrogation reports and captured Nazi files, which identify the guard as Ivan Marchenko.

"If we were 100 per cent sure of his innocence before, we are now 150 per cent sure," said Demjanjuk's son, John, 26. He predicted that his father would be freed in the coming month.

Demjanjuk seemed largely oblivious to the proceedings. He was brought into court in a wheelchair, sobbing in agony after he fell and hurt his back while being transported to the courthouse.

Yoram Sheftel, Demjanjuk's Israeli lawyer, told the court that in the past year he had accumulated 79 depositions and affidavits proving that Mr Marchenko and Demjanjuk were different people and that his client never was at Treblinka. His evidence, based primarily on photographs, SS staff files and the interrogation of 37 former camp guards, suggests that Mr Marchenko was nine years older and 3½ inches taller than Demjanjuk, was born in another part of Ukraine and was married with three children, when Demjanjuk was single. Mr Sheftel has highlighted other physical differences, but suggested that they may have looked enough alike to confuse Treblinka survivors who identified Demjanjuk as "Ivan the Terrible".

The most compelling new evidence is the KGB interrogation sheet of Nikolai Shelayev, who operated the gas chambers at Treblinka with "Ivan the Terrible" and was captured, tried and executed by the Russians at the end of the war. According to his account, Mr Marchenko was transferred by the SS to Trieste in June 1943. In the spring of 1944 he deserted the German forces and escaped from Fiume near-by, now the Yugoslav town of Rijeka. Shelayev, who was interrogated in 1951, said he last saw Mr Marchenko in Fiume in March 1945. Mr Marchenko had a Yugoslav girlfriend and planned to settle in the area with her.

Michael Shaked, the prosecuting lawyer, also presented the court with new wartime files that identify Demjanjuk by name and SS number. They show that he was transferred to Sobibor, in Poland, on March 26, 1943 and then to Flossenbürg, in Germany, on October 10, 1943. However, Mr Shaked said that he has not found any new corroborating evidence linking Demjanjuk to Treblinka.

Residents in Mashhad said on Sunday that black smoke hung over parts of the city, after thousands of angry Iranians went on the rampage, burning buses, wrecking banks and government buildings and looting government shops. Commercial life remained at a standstill and government offices were closed, they said.

The government has been sending in bulldozers to raze squatter dwellings in Iran's cities, home for tens of thousands of unskilled workers who labour in factories. Unlike the peasants, these urban dwellers have not shared in recent schemes for land redistribution.

ANC expects black rule to free funds

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

THE firebrands of the African National Congress have faced a particularly acute dilemma during the past few days. The problem has been how to reconcile the hunger of their supporters for land, housing and social justice with the need to reassure the whites that they have little to fear from an ANC government.

During a four-day conference to draw up policy guidelines for the movement, the ANC leadership was at great pains to say that they would not do more than the economy would bear. But Trevor Manuel, head of the ANC's economics department, spoke of "the post-apartheid dividend", analogous to the so-called peace dividend in the West.

As the ending of the Cold war is expected to free funds for social development, so the ending of white minority rule is expected to free funds for black development. Mr Manuel said that they were studying ways of reallocating resources under a democratic government.

He said that there had been tremendous waste in the economy "within various government departments, within the way in which certain industries have been protected in South Africa and the way in which economic decisions have been taken in pursuance of political objectives of the apartheid regime."

There will be a post-apartheid dividend that will make an impact on the amount of resources available to fulfil the kinds of objectives that our policy guidelines set out."

Detailed discussion of the ANC's programme has been largely swamped by the movement's threats of mass action in support of its constitutional demands. But the programme, enthusiastically approved by 800 representatives from all over the country, calls for reforms regarding land and agricultural policy. A new housing policy would be administered by a single national housing department. A state-financed education system would depend on a national curriculum. A national health service would take over most health care. It also lays down guidelines for the future of the South African security forces.

● Moscow: After talks in the Kremlin with President Yeltsin, President de Klerk announced yesterday that South Africa was extending an immediate line of credit of 100 million rand to Russia to boost trade (Michael Binyon writes).

Speaking on the first day of a visit that ended 35 years of mutual hostility, Mr de Klerk said he was in Russia because communism had fallen and apartheid was dead in South Africa. The credit, he said, would be increased as relations developed.



Restoring cup: a policeman offers water to John Demjanjuk, who hurt his back in a fall on the way to his appeal hearing in Jerusalem yesterday

China bans mourning in square

BY CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING AND DAVID WATTS IN LONDON

CHINA has banned laughter in the vicinity of Tiananmen Square, where many Chinese died during pro-democracy protests on June 4, 1989. On the signs erected at the monument to the people's heroes, the government has also banned mourning or the placing of flowers.

After a long silence, Xu Jiatun, who was Peking's representative in Hong Kong before defecting to America, has reiterated his faith in socialism while defending the 1989 democracy movement. Mr Xu wrote in the *South China Morning Post* that the movement "evolved into a demand by all the people for... comprehensive far-reaching reforms." But he failed to condemn the killings, suggesting that he still sees himself as part of the Communist Party.

Chinese officials in Hong Kong yesterday rebuffed attempts by Dai Qing, the dissident journalist, to obtain permission to return home.

Leading article, page 13

Arafat has cerebral blood clot removed

Yassir Arafat, 62, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, underwent a successful operation in Amman yesterday to remove a cerebral blood clot brought on when he was in a plane crash in the Libyan desert in April. King Hussein of Jordan visited him as soon as he woke from the operation.

Koichi Kato, Tokyo's chief cabinet secretary, has exchanged his old limousine for a Cadillac in an effort to encourage imports of American cars.

Jacques Calvet, chairman of Peugeot, says that he is considering running for president of France in 1995 when François Mitterrand's second seven-year term is due to expire.

The ailing Japanese foreign minister, Michio Watanabe, 66, is suffering from a gallstone and a bile-duct infection and may require surgery. The prime minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, has taken over his duties temporarily.

The Samoan-born jazz singer Mavis Rivers, 63, who recorded albums for the Capitol and Reprise labels in the 1960s, has died in Los Angeles after a stroke.

Lutz Stavenhagen, 52, a former top aide of Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, has died of pneumonia.

The Spanish foreign minister, Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, 62, who has suffered poor health for months, cancelled all his engagements because of tiredness after visits to Chile and Argentina last week.

Kenneth Kaunda, former president of Zambia, was forced to flee a public rally at Chingola when a jeering crowd surged towards him, official newspapers reported.

President Nujoma of Namibia has received Kenya's highest civilian award from President Moi for being an inspiration to mankind in the struggle to free his people from colonial domination.

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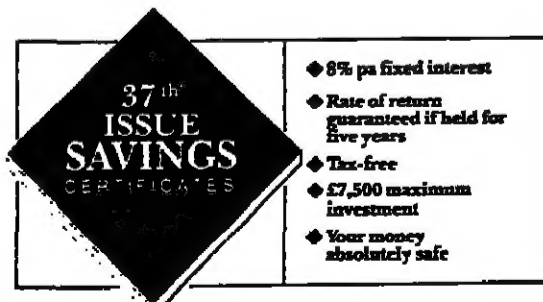
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Rio summit: idealists and sceptics watch for a North-South compromise

Middle-man Major takes role of realist

By ROBIN OAKLEY
POLITICAL EDITOR

THE British government is already facing a painful dilemma over the Rio de Janeiro Earth summit which John Major will attend next week, having pressed President Bush to do the same.

British ministers are alarmed at the prospect of signing the bio-diversity treaty on the protection of global wildlife and plant species. They argue that in its present form it amounts to the signing of a blank cheque, with the organisation which would

monitor results being empowered to set unlimited expenditure levels, for which the bills would have to be met by the richer industrialised nations.

One minister said yesterday that the lawyers' advice was that bills would be coming in for ever, if Britain were to sign the treaty in its present form.

But the government is conscious, too, that if the summit is perceived as a flop it could rebound on the international standing of Mr Major, who was one of the first world



leaders to commit himself to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development summit — to give it its full title — and to urge others to do so too. Some argue that this consideration makes it almost impossible for Britain to fail to sign the bio-diversity treaty.

Foreign office sources are already complaining bitterly that "all or nothing" environmental lobbies are unwilling to consider any reasonable compromise on environmental questions, but are insisting that "half a loaf" would be a total sell-out. There is considerable British irritation, too, at what is seen as the gesture politics of Carlo Ripa di Meana, the European Community's environment com-

missioner, who is boycotting the meeting on the grounds that it is a pre-arranged sham and that targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases, on which he has worked hard in Europe, are too imprecise.

Michael Howard, the environment secretary, believes that Britain has done much to give the summit the chance of success. He played a key role in persuading the Americans to attend by securing changes in the wording of the other key agreement on global warming, and a summit without the United States would have been dismissed as pointless. But instead Britain is now being pilloried by environmental lobbies for having connived in the watering down of the agreement to cut back carbon dioxide emissions.

There is resentment in the British camp that other nations, as some are apt to do within the EC, are willing to sign up lightly to agreements which will never be implemented and which they have no intention of honouring rather than putting work into securing deals which have some chance of actually being put into effect.

One senior Whitehall source said yesterday: "When we sign up to treaties we mean it. Some other countries have a rather more cavalier attitude."

Amid the increasingly frantic international posturing, the British delegation, which will include Mr Major, Mr Howard and Baroness Chalker, the overseas aid minister, are seeking to become the realists of the Rio meeting, by brokering deals between the sceptics and the idealists.

In that role, they believe, they may have been helped by the hard line taken by America, which is refusing any concrete commitments on the environment which could hinder the American recovery from recession. Mr Major is flying to see President Bush in Washington this weekend before he moves on to Rio.

David Maclean, the environment minister who is already in Rio, ruled out yesterday the spending of up to £75 billion by richer nations on securing sustainable economic development in poorer countries. He said: "The developed world is in recession. If the developing world thinks the major nations of the world in the middle of a very, very bad recession have the resources to be able to proceed quickly, then I am afraid that is just not possible."

Labour was quick to home in on the government's environmental embarrassment. Ann Taylor, the shadow environment minister, said it was nonsense for ministers to go to Rio at all if Britain was not to sign the bio-diversity treaty. A Department of the Environment spokesman emphasised: "Nothing has yet been decided. There are two weeks of talks to go yet before the signing ceremony."

Pledge by Bush, page 1

Tented campaigners make their pitch

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

TENTS and marquees were still being erected when "92 Global Forum" — the alternative environment conference in Rio de Janeiro set up on a lively and colourful Flamengo beachside — opened its doors to the public yesterday.

Environmentalists were hanging up their posters publicising the demands and messages they hope to send to world leaders who begin to discuss world environmental policies at the Earth summit in a conference hall 20 miles outside central Rio de Janeiro tomorrow.

Wigol Schaffer, one of at least 4,000 environmentalists taking part in the forum, belongs to Apremabi, a Brazilian non-governmental organisation that is campaigning against deforestation in southern Brazil.

"We are here to get our campaign against deforestation heard and seen by the public, but we are also here to tell world leaders that this is an urgent problem that cannot be mixed up with politics," Senator Schaffer said. He added that the offer on Sunday from President Bush of \$150 million (£82 million) a year for reforestation schemes in developing countries was just "a drop in the ocean". He said: "Our organisation alone, which is campaigning for the reforestation of 80,000 hectares (200,000 acres) in southern Brazil, needs close to that to carry out full programme to rebuild the forest."

Apremabi is working to stop the destruction of a pine forest called Mata Atlantica in the southern state of Santa Catarina. It is an area that once was inhabited by 200,000 indigenous people from the Xokling and Kalikang tribes. But it has been developed by a community of German and Italian immigrants who started arriving in Brazil in the mid-19th century and mainly live in the city of Blumenau. Now there are only 1,500 indigenous people and 3 per cent of the original forest left.

Bill Dumont, a forester from British Columbia, Canada, who has a stand near Apremabi's, disagrees with protectionist policies, however. He says that deforestation cannot be avoided. "We cannot tell people not to use their forests; it provides work and a living," he said.

He proposes to put the Canadian model forward to Brazilian non-governmental organisations working on deforestation. "In British Columbia, 52 per cent of forests were felled, but there was a concerted effort to reforest those areas and it worked," he said. The problem in Brazil, he added, was that most of the deforested areas were used for unregulated cattle farms. "People have to be told that forests can be used but have to be replaced."



Fatal attraction: a woman of the Yanomami people in Brazil's Amazon region examining a lipstick. The Yanomami culture is at risk from outside influences and diseases brought by prospectors

Counting the trees brings confusion

FROM MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT, IN RIO DE JANEIRO

HOW many trees should a country have? "That's a tough one, isn't it?" says Andrew Bennett, chief natural resources adviser to Britain's Overseas Development Administration.

The question is easily answered with food, he says: you have to have enough, or people starve. But with trees it is harder. Just how much forest cover does the world need? Where does it need it? Why does it need it? What code of conduct should countries adopt towards it? Should Brazil preserve its rainforests? If so, should Britain's road-building transport department spare Oxley Wood, the last stretch of ancient woodland in London?

It is because these questions have never really been asked before that the Earth summit negotiators are contemplating a third agreement to go alongside the conventions on climate change and bio-diversity, the first international statement of principles on forests. But it is hanging in the balance because it, too, has become bogged down in North-South rivalry.

Industrialised countries, led by the United States, want the statement to be turned into another binding convention, and countries involved in the

FORESTS

logging of tropical rainforest, led by Malaysia, are refusing. President Bush's announcement yesterday of \$150 million (£82 million) in aid for tropical forest projects is an indication that America feels easy, and even self-righteous, with the issue.

"The Americans are keen

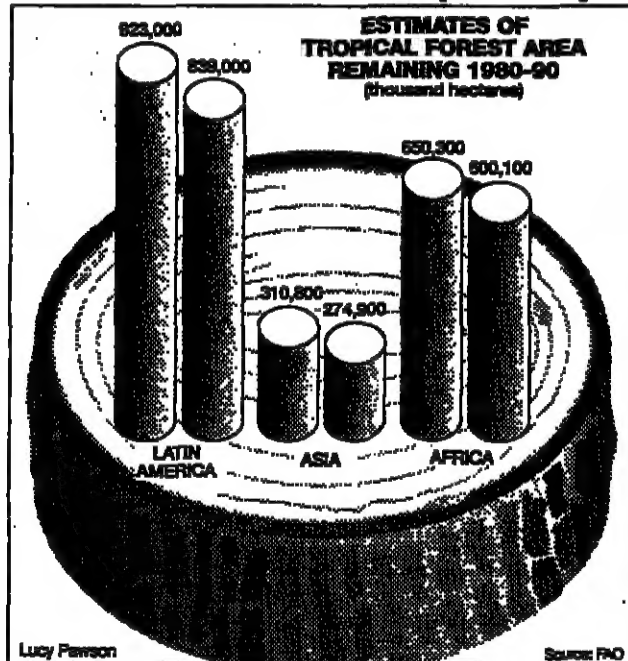
on a forest convention because they would not have to do much, whereas with strong climate change and bio-diversity treaties their commitments would have been considerable," said Anthony Juniper, tropical rainforest campaigner for Friends of the Earth.

As a result, tropical rainforest destruction has become a serious point of disagree-

ment between North and South. Environmentalists in Europe and North America look aghast at the pictures of rainforest cleared and burnt and criticise the logging nations, such as Brazil, Malaysia and Indonesia. Yet these countries fiercely resent the criticism, pointing out that the rich North has already ripped out its own forests to a far greater extent.

Mr Bush's pledge will be seen by many merely as an attempt to polish America's tarnished environmental record. Last month the Malaysians, tongue only partly in cheek, suggested all nations should join in a new "Greening of the World". You like forests, they said, so do we. Let us have, say, 30 per cent of land area in all our countries under forest cover. Those which have less can grow towards this target and, if unable to do so, can give financial help to those countries willing to try.

The Malaysians currently have 56 per cent forest cover, and say they are aiming for a permanent level of 50 per cent. Industrialised countries have a much smaller proportion: Britain's forest cover is less than 10 per cent. So far the offer is still lying on the table.



UN relief pledged to Africa

Geneva: An appeal to end fighting in Mozambique and avert famine was made yesterday by Baroness Chalker, Minister of Overseas Development, at a United Nations conference pledging help to ten drought-ravaged countries in southern Africa (Alan McGregor writes).

"The continuing insecurity there is a serious obstacle to relief efforts," she said. She hoped that the peace talks between the Mozambique factions in Rome would lead quickly to a ceasefire.

John Hicks, the American delegate, also emphasised the need to end the fighting in announcing donations totalling £220 million. Britain donated £34 million and is supporting European Community proposals for an additional food aid programme.

"It is difficult to think of an emergency which has held so many countries at once in so tight a grip," Baroness Chalker added. She regretted that South Africa had not been invited to the conference.

Supplies looted

Nairobi: Somali gunmen at Mogadishu airport looted 1,760lb in medical supplies and six tonnes of United Nations high-protein food mix flown in over the weekend to save starving children, relief workers said. (Reuters)

Unholy water

Delhi: Mahant Veer Bhadra Mishra, head of a Hindu religious sect, is taking a bottle of polluted water from the Ganges to the Rio summit. Much of the pollution is caused by inefficient cremations along the Indian river bank. (Reuters)

Running dry

Peking: A national campaign to save water will be launched in China next week to alert the public to the problems of waste, notably in industry, the China Daily said. (AFP)

Warning given

Paris: A group of 264 scientists and intellectuals from 29 countries have issued a warning against "irrational" decisions likely to compromise world progress at the Earth summit. Le Figaro reported here. (AFP)

Aid discussed

Addis Ababa: Officials from five states in the Horn of Africa are meeting to discuss how to get food through to an estimated 4.5 million people, destitute and facing starvation because of the civil war in Somalia. (Reuters)

Making rain

Harare: Herbert Ushewokunze, Zimbabwe's water resources minister and president of the traditional healers association, has paid a rain-maker, to try to end Zimbabwe's worst drought this century. (Reuters)

California senate primary steals limelight

Hollywood casts Perot in main feature

EVEN by their Californian supporters George Bush and Bill Clinton are more tolerated than loved. According to polling for today's last big primary of the year, the president is rated unfavourably by 56 per cent of voters here, 9 per cent more than his national "bad news number". For Governor Clinton, the same gloomy figures are 54 per cent and 48 per cent.

The president, beset by rumours from his crumbling campaign team, has been able to do little to improve his standing by personal appearances in riot zones. Fortunately for him, Patrick Buchanan, his only Republican opponent, is beaten.

Mr Clinton stayed here closer to polling day than expected, nervous that Jerry Brown, the former California governor, might do well enough to damage his near certain nomination. Polls suggest, however, that Mr Brown is almost the least of his worries.

Eyes are fixed on Ross Perot and on whatever else might happen in a political year that has never remained uneventful for long. Hollywood, an increasingly important source of image-enhancers and cheque-writers for both parties, is quieter now than it was in February when Senator Bob Kerrey was the choice of the Democratic stars and Arnold Schwarzenegger was trying to rescue Mr

Fund-raising parties have been put on hold and some scriptwriters believe that the winning election scenario has still to be written, Peter Stothard writes in Los Angeles

Bush in New Hampshire. Big fund-raising parties are "on hold".

Early revelations about Mr Clinton's relationship with Jennifer Flowers did not hurt him much among the bankrollers of Beverly Hills, many of whose clients and friends had received similarly unwelcome exposure from supermarket tabloids.

Although Ross Perot does not need Walt Disney money and offends Venice Beach morality with his talk of not hiring homosexuals for senior government positions, the film community feels that he has a place in the plot. John Milius, the conservative writer of *Dirty Harry* and *Magnum Force*, is one of Mr Perot's outspoken Hollywood fans. The names of others, including Steve Martin and Jack Nicholson, the actors, have emerged in the drip-feed of industry gossip.

Imaginative scenario-writers see Mr Bush defeated by a Perot-Clinton ticket. But everyone knows that there must be many more script conferences before that can happen.

In November, California will choose 54 electoral college members, a fifth of the

270 votes needed for victory. In the primary season, despite efforts to bring its election date forward, it is voting too late to have an impact on whom the main parties select.

The more immediate interest is in the result of today's double senate primary. This rare political event is caused by the retirement of Alan Cranston, the Democrat veteran, and the need for John Seymour, the Republican appointed member, to gain election in his own right for the final two years of the term originally won by Pete Wilson, his mentor and now governor.

This is supposed to be the "year of the elected woman" and it would appeal to California's "leading edge" mentality to be the first state to have two women senators after November. Dianne Feinstein is set for an easy win today in her Democratic primary against Gray Davis, a former Brown aide. She would then have to defeat Mr Seymour in a classic contest between a charismatic north Californian woman and a dull southern Californian man. Tradition gives masculinity and dullness the advan-

tage. But Ms Feinstein is as tough an opponent as Mr Seymour is untied.

Her fellow San Franciscan, Barbara Boxer, has a harder task today against one well-known male opponent, Leo McCarthy, the lieutenant-governor, and one exceptionally well-financed one, Mel Levine, the Los Angeles congressman. Late indications suggested that Ms Boxer, who is to the left of Ms Feinstein and has been pilloried on television for "bouncing cheques" at the House bank, may just scrape home. If she does, she will face either Tom Campbell, a moderate Republican, or the more conservative Bruce Herschensohn. If Mr Herschensohn wins, the clash between two of the country's most outspoken partisans on abortion could be one of the biggest national dramas even in this dramatic year.

Party nominees are also being chosen today for 52 congressional seats, the largest number ever to be sent to Washington by one state. There is especially strong interest in Washington in the newly created 22nd district where Michael Huffington, one of the Republican party's wealthiest backers, has financed his own multimillion-dollar attack on Bob Lagomarsino, the long-time Republican incumbent.

Monied mavericks, page 12

Yankee knowhow spreads the light

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN NEW YORK

When it comes to celebrating Yankee ingenuity, Americans have always ranked Thomas Edison's light bulb up there with such revolutionary symbols of industrial might as the Model T Ford and the Douglas DC3 aeroplane. So it was not surprising that the launch of a revolutionary light bulb yesterday was being hailed as an historic event.

The new bulb, called the E-lamp, uses high-frequency radio signals instead of a filament to produce light more efficiently and more cheaply; but what makes it special is its lifetime. Instead of the nine-month life expectancy of an ordinary household bulb, the E-lamp is said to last about 14 years if used an average of four hours a day.

"We feel this can be as significant an invention as the CD or the fax machine or the cellular telephone was in the 1980s," said Pierre Villere of Interspace Technologies, a California company which introduced its invention at the Edison Electric Institute's meeting in Columbus, Ohio.

For the first time since its invention, light bulbs will no longer be a disposable good, but a durable one, said Mr Villere.

The arrival of the E-lamp was featured on the front pages of *The New York Times* among several newspapers, as well as television news. *USA Today* hailed the invention as proof that American manufacturers were moving with the times, albeit under pressure from consumers and the Japanese. It was no accident that a new report showed that US-made cars now compared favourably with Japanese models for quality. Now, you could pay off your mortgage and bring up your children without changing a light bulb, it noted. The result could be billions of dollars in savings in energy costs.

In the E-lamp, an electromagnetic coil generates a radio signal that mixes with the same gas used in fluorescent lamps to form plasma, or ionised gas. The plasma strikes a phosphorous coating inside the bulb which glows. The bulb will initially cost several pounds, but it uses only a quarter of the electricity of a traditional bulb and prices are expected to come down soon after it reaches the market early next year. It will also be cheaper than the compact fluorescent bulb which has had limited appeal to consumers.

America's airborne sentries sign off

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AFTER 46 years as America's nuclear sentry, the Strategic Air Command, one of the most awesome of symbols of superpower tensions, ceased to exist yesterday.

With the threat of a sudden and massive Soviet nuclear attack all but vanished, the institution which inspired such films as *Dr Strangelove* is being broken up and its responsibilities dispersed. At a ceremony at the Offutt Air Force base on Nebraska's plains, where the command's global nerve centre was located in a giant hardened bunker beneath the ground, the command's flag, with its shield bearing an armoured fist clenching lightning bolts and an olive branch, was lowered for the last time.

In its entire life the command had never fired a missile or dropped a bomb in anger. "There is a sense in which you could say that Strategic Air Command won the war that it was established to fight — the Cold War," General Merrill McPeak, the air force chief of staff, said.

The command was created in March 1946 to control America's vast intercontinental bomber and missile force and act as the ultimate deterrent. Its motto was "Peace Is Our Profession". From February 3, 1961, to July 4,

1990, it kept a fully equipped command-and-control plane, known as a Looking Glass flight, airborne every minute of every day, in case the underground command centre was destroyed in a Soviet attack. At its peak around the time of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the command employed nearly 300,000 people, absorbed nearly half the American defence budget and controlled more than 4,000 strategic missiles.

Last September President Bush ordered American B-1 bombers and Minuteman II missiles off alert for the first time since 1957, and by yesterday the command's domain had shrunk to 272 long-range bombers, 950 Minuteman and Peacekeeper inter-continental missiles, and just over 500 tanker planes for in-flight refuelling.

A new down-sized Strategic Command is to combine control of America's long-range nuclear missiles and the US Navy's submarine-launched missiles, and will take over SAC's Nebraska state-of-the-art headquarters, where eight huge video screens keep America's top brass abreast of developments around the world. SAC's bomber fleet will be combined with the air force's tactical fighters in a new Air Combat Command based at Langley, Virginia.

Woodrow Wyatt

Ministers have been insensitive to Bomber Harris's memory

It is not old men who forget but young. Born in 1946, Malcolm Rifkind, minister of defence, was not at St Clement Danes on Sunday for the unveiling by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother of the statue of Bomber Harris. Nor was any other cabinet minister there to give a belated salute to the leader of Bomber Command and his valiant men. In Churchill's words, Bomber Command's creation "was the beginning of defeat for the Luftwaffe and a turning point in our struggle for air supremacy without which we would not have won the war".

Nearly all our ministers are too young to remember, but they could have consulted the records. Instead they were fearful the Germans would be upset by official praise for the commander whose men did most of all to thwart Hitler, as acknowledged by Albert Speer, described by Churchill as "the most capable of German ministers of production".

The great Adenauer, imprisoned by the Nazis in 1934 and 1944, was mayor of Cologne in 1917 and 1945. He would not have made the snivelling protests of the present mayor against a British ceremony coinciding with the 50th anniversary of a raid on Cologne. Adenauer knew such things had to be done to destroy the Nazis and their grip on the minds of the German people.

It is said that ordinary Germans knew little of the persecution of Jews, the concentration camps and gas chambers in which about seven million Jews and dissidents died. I was in Munich for some weeks before Christmas, 1936. I never forgot a talented young Jew of my age asking me to help him get out of Germany where his family had lived for many decades. Already Jews were being ripped from their homes and their properties destroyed. The Nazis were in the streets, beer halls and restaurants threatening doom for all Jews. It was impossible for the German public to be unaware. Yet they did nothing.

Gandhi once said to me that if the Germans had ruled India they would have driven tanks over non-violent protesters as they lay in the streets. No British officers and soldiers would have been willing to transport millions and ensure their ghastly sufferings and death: it was far too easy to procure Germans for this work. It is probable, as Speer thought, that but for Bomber Command the war in Europe would have dragged on until 1946, with thousands more innocents slaughtered by Hitler and multitudes more civilians and soldiers killed on the German and Allied sides. If it is true that Bomber Command, not only smashed German war production but killed 600,000 civilians then, frightful though that may be, it was far better than the alternative.

We can hope now with confidence that the barbaric streak in the German character has been purged. Certainly, in the heat of war Harris spoke of making the Boche suffer. That was in the context of the natural desire to retaliate for the many thousands of British civilians killed by air raids, which would have continued if Harris had not ripped the guts out of the Luftwaffe. Stalin had solemnly paraded Russia's debt of gratitude to Harris, as did Truman and Eisenhower on behalf of the US. Despite Churchill's recommendation for a peacetime, Attlee left him out of our victory honours. We began to be ashamed of the man who had done so much to save European civilisation, because of our fastidious disdain for the necessary means. We should cease to emulate the Emperor Justinian, who had his most successful general, Count Belisarius, falsely tried for treason, egged on by the loyal count's spiteful, jealous and petty-minded enemies.

Rio's environmentalists should consider the failings of the Evil Plot theory of mankind, says Janet Daley

Wallowing in green guilt

world, so accustomed to carrying the can for the past, is propagating a new kind of guilt with which to saddle the poor South. Having no price to pay for past excesses, the developing world is being asked to flog itself in advance for what it might be tempted to do in the future.

Thus the burden of guilt is more fairly distributed between established polluters who wronged the planet in ignorance, and potential polluters who can never claim that they did not know better. What is on offer is some kind of trade-off: we will use our cars less if they will have fewer fridges. Our post hoc culpability is to be balanced by their future self-denial. Can we never have world improvements without wasting time and energy (no pun intended) on accusations?

The environmental lobby seems to have learnt little about the folly of recrimination. Its first incarnations relied almost entirely on infantile, anti-capitalist dogma, making Greenery Mark I scarcely distinguishable from an-

archo-communism. The force of its case was weakened by what looked like a neurotic desire for self-flagellation. An anti-Western bias, combined with a distinctly totalitarian tendency, gave it the air of one more species of adolescent leftism arriving on the tail end of 1970s political fashion.

When the Soviet Union disintegrated and revealed its multitude of shameful secrets to the world, we discovered that socialist states without a profit motive to their names had been the greatest polluters of all. But scarcely a blush came to the collective cheek of the green folk, who simply expanded their demonology to encompass all industrialised countries, rather than restricting themselves to capitalist ones.

And here is a sad paradox. Western democracies have a peculiarly sticky dilemma when asked to pay the ecological price: they face the short-term wrath of electors, who may be willing to buy the odd roll of recycled paper but balk at the thought of

paying higher taxes for aid to the developing world (and instantly terminate the life of any government which threatens restrictions on the use of their cars). Totalitarian societies that could, in principle, do anything at all, unencumbered as they are by the need for an electoral mandate, never seem to see this liberating condition as a way to do good but unpopular things. They invariably allow a lack of free speech and public information to license total irresponsibility.

There is a real danger for the green movement in relying too heavily on the compelling dramatic idea of a conscious conspiracy to loot the planet of its finite resources, either by the selfish rich or the short-sighted poor. An international cartel of exploiters and corruptors who will callously poison the earth in order to safeguard their profit margins may make for a gripping thriller scenario, but what becomes of the movement's credibility when things turn out to be more complex? Dividing the world into

bad guys and good guys is puerile and irrelevant. Conspiracy stories may be attractive to the media, but for every credulous devotee there is at least one cynic out there who knows that it isn't as simple as all that.

The desire always to see a conscious plan for evil is just one part of a wider human impulse to believe that *ad hoc*, random events are part of some grand design. So eager are we to understand the world that we prefer even a malign order to no order at all. Better to think that President Kennedy was shot by agents of his own government than to see his assassination as a piece of unpredictable chaos. Not that the Kennedy conspiracy theories are without credence. They are, like all good conspiracy stories, utterly credible. But could that simply be because any way of looking at a set of unconnected facts which suggests a pattern is more sympathetic to human reason?

Sometimes the plot simply involves snuffing out alternative

views. Much public excitement has been caused by the claim, from reputable scientists, that AIDS-related diseases are not caused by the HIV virus after all. This is an appealing notion not just because, if it were correct, it would defuse the terror of an uncontrollable plague but because it hints at subterranean motives. Is AIDS just another name for long-standing diseases that are only identified in this new way when they are visited upon people with certain lifestyles? Is the dogma of political correctness covering up other valuable research avenues? This is a classically persuasive conspiracy story because it hangs together so coherently. For many reasons, we would like to believe it to be true.

We cannot conceive of an uncaused event and we generally prefer our causes to be a function of someone's will because, however nasty that will may be, it is tractable: another mind that can be argued with and persuaded. We may be trapped on a dying planet, but we need not be prisoners of the need to see our fate as someone's wicked plan. It is narrow-minded cant to allow the hunt for perpetrators to swamp the search for solutions.

A bigger vote for their bucks

Another maverick millionaire is showing the power of the US business insurgency, writes Peter Stothard

William Randolph Hearst would have enjoyed today's California primary elections. This is the year when the "independent man of wealth", who loves his business and hates political parties, has become the voters' friend. All around the "Hearst Castle" at San Simeon, the private resort where film stars once cavorted with financiers and godfathers, sit cars spattered with "Perot for President" signs. In front of the tapestries from Versailles and the 3,000-year-old lion gods from Egypt the talk is of how Ross Perot might do what "Citizen Kane" Hearst never could — take on the system and win the White House.

The voters of San Simeon cannot yet vote for Mr Perot. Although the Texan billionaire closed his weekend rally in Florida with a band playing "California here I come", the task of turning his 30 per cent opinion poll support into votes here must wait for a while. Perotism does not, however, begin or end with his nominal chief. Mr Hearst, if he were still alive, could vote today in California's 22nd district for another multi-millionaire populist, one whose campaign has come to symbolise this extraordinary election season.

Michael Huffington is 44 years old and, like Mr Hearst, inherited a mighty fortune from a father who was a mining tycoon. Today he is one of the richest and most generous supporters of the national Republican party. He has served in Ronald Reagan's Pentagon. He has poured large sums into George Bush's coffers and frequently been cited as a leader of the party's next generation. If this were a normal year, Mr Huffington would have been asked to pay his usual \$100,000 into the president's "Team One

Hundred" fund and to guarantee a further sum for the re-election effort "when the going gets rough". If he had wanted elected office himself, he would have been expected to take on an entrenched Democrat somewhere.

This year, he told me at his Santa Barbara campaign headquarters, he was not behaving according to plan: "I would work with either Ross Perot or George Bush as president but Ross Perot would more easily bring the change that America needs... and I am being very careful about whom I give my money to." Instead of being a loyal part of the Republican family he has helped to finance, Mr Huffington is today locked in a nasty fought struggle against it. Despite the opposition of the president, of Vice-President Quayle and almost the whole California party, he is attempting to throw a senior Republican congressman out of office.

"Childish, vengeful and personal" is his own description of the "Is your vote for sale?" campaign against him by the nine-times elected Bob Lagomarsino. "We're going to kick that rich kid back to Texas as fast as he came here" is one of the more printable threats against Mr Huffington from the "real Republican" side.

Mr Huffington's tall, slim frame and sandy face is little

known to the national public. He would be best identified in Britain as the husband of the author and society hostess Arianna Stassinopoulou, who was vigorously campaigning at the weekend in jeans and "Huffington for Congress" T-shirt. But this Perot Republican has already spent \$2.3 million of his own money to make himself known here, more than any other congressional campaign this year. Like Mr Perot, he has promised to spend "whatever it takes" to win.

By traditional rules, as he admitted, the prospects of a recently arrived businessman, however rich and well connected, against an 18-year incumbent would be slim. "But in 1992 it is at last an electoral asset to be an

independently successful businessman: even my opponent, who's been a politician for 34 years, has found himself a business to boast of."

The success of the Huffington campaign has already been remarkable: local observers say that the race, which ought to have been a certainty for Mr Lagomarsino, is now "too close to call". Washington is watching closely.

The American political establishment, spread out among state houses, party offices and newspaper bureaux, has been slow to grasp the rapid acceleration in the weakening of political parties. William Randolph Hearst was the greatest populist of his day, with a direct line to mass public

opinion through his media empire. But when he wanted a congressional seat he had to go to the Democratic party machine, and when he challenged the Tammany Hall barons he lost. A few rich families, most notably the Kennedys, have bought existing party machines. A few individuals, such as the former Texas governor John Connally, have wasted millions on new machinery when the time was not ripe. Today, however, with local parties seen as little more than merchant banks for fund-raising, the time to bypass them seems very ripe — both for Mr Perot and to others who want a political future.

Many in Washington still see this "businessman's insurgency"

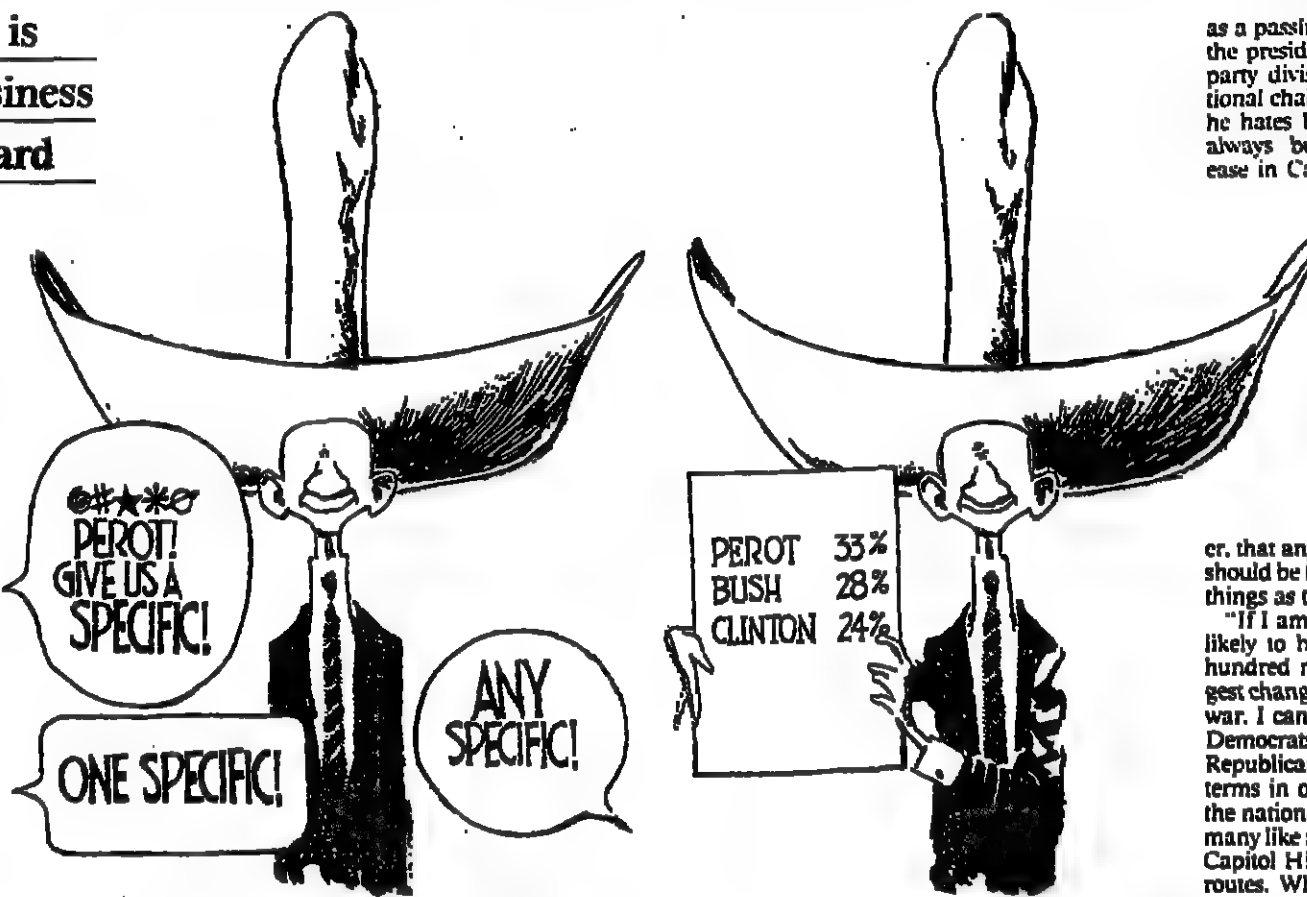
as a passing fad. Among them is the president himself, who hates party divisions and non-conventional challenges even more than he hates broccoli. Mr Bush has always been particularly ill-at-ease in California, the state that prides itself on predicting the shape of things to come. At a recent White House dinner the president promised Mrs Huffington that, "if Michael were to win, he would be happily accepted back into the main Republican fold".

Mr Huffington is reluctant, however, that any election success of his should be followed by the shape of things as they were.

"If I am elected," he said, "I'm likely to be one of more than a hundred new members, the biggest change in Congress since the war. I can see myself siding with Democrats, Perot supporters and Republicans to impose limits on terms in office and action to cut the national deficit. There will be many like me who have made it to Capitol Hill by non-conventional routes. Whoever is president, he will face a different world."

The Perot campaign, whose workers are outside seeking signatures of support, agrees.

Back at Hearst Castle the last visitors are filing out for the night. The middle-aged women in front of me are looking forward to the Barbara Walters television show in which Mr and Mrs Perot are to be interviewed. Their anticipation is almost that of the bewitched. To hear them talk, President Bush and the Democratic Bill Clinton might as well have spent this primary season on the golf course. Even the Spanish gargoyles, sprouting around the eaves of the building where Greco Carbo once slept, begin to bear strangely familiar faces — like that of the man from Texas with the sticking-out ears and the three billion dollars to spend.



Year of the outsider: the party inertia that inspired Perot is making more rich men challenge the system



...and moreover
CRAIG BROWN

In line with the rest of the media, all this week and for the remainder of the decade this column will be devoting itself exclusively to lively green issues. We would like to point out that all the words in this new green column have been 100 per cent recycled from the very same words in other green columns. Today, we confront just a few of the green problems facing the world today in an in-depth question-and-answer session:

Question from a Woodbug on a Pine Table, Islington, NI: "I am writing to ask you what can be done about the vastly depleted resources evident in today's dinner party chat. From my point of view, the rise in conservation has been marked by a spiralling drop in conversation. Talk is now restricted to bottle-banks, the ozone layer and the need for more public transport. Unless something drastic can be done, human conversation will become depleted still further. Already many expert woodbugs on the front line in high-risk conversation areas such as Hampstead predict that, early in the next century, dinner-party talk will begin to consist only of a series of sighs, moans and futile gestures. Please advise, AW."

Answer: Sadly, a great many woodbugs in the Islington area have already been bored to death by the catastrophic rise in green conversation. In one recent case, an elderly woodbug had only just recovered from an onslaught of Organic Farming conversation when he was felled

by a monologue about Brazilian rainforests, with fatal consequences. The only hope for Woodbugkind in Islington is the One Woodbug scheme, a plan for all woodbugs to pool their resources and eat their way through the legs of all Islington diners, thus jolting all guests into changing the subject, even for a short time.

Question from an obscure Brazilian Tribesman: In recent years, a great many rare and exotic "rockstars" have surfaced in our rainforests, and with them have come a great many colourful species of fawnier such as "dollybirds", "agents" and "filmcrews". Sadly, the number of these rockstars and fawners has dramatically declined over the past few months as a result of new holes opening up in their attention-spans. This means we have been left alone in our rainforests with little chance of appearing on television or playing our native instruments on top-selling albums and thus escaping from our ancient civilisation to somewhere more fun, with fewer creepy-crawlies and lots of cars and buildings. Advice, please, BT.

Answer: I recommend you contact a new pressure group, set up by a group of concerned Brazilian Tribesmen. Current initiatives undertaken by the "Save the Rockstar" campaign include overseas fact-finding missions to rockstar habitats in Los Angeles and London. The penthouse flats and Georgian homes of these threatened creatures will teach Brazilian Tribes-

men a lot that they didn't know about a calmer, less hectic way of life, a life full of essential modern conveniences in an environment far removed from the rat-race and hurry-burly of the jungle. And if you treat these vanishing rockstars with great care and understanding, they might even not sing for you.

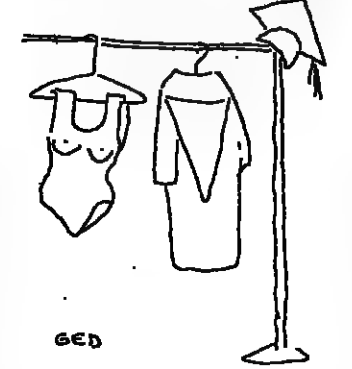
Question from the president, Rodents for Cosmetics Organisation: How much longer will widespread Rodent Discrimination be practised by such groups as Ms Anita Roddick's Body Shop? For many decades, the rats, mice and rabbits who compose the majority of our members were allowed to enjoy their fair share of skin and beauty products in return for their help with a little testing. This meant that, for the first time in our history, we were able to improve upon our rather unpleasant smell with the odd dab of perfume, and to make ourselves much prettier by recourse to lipstick, eyeliner and so on. Now, in the wake of the short-sighted human "green" movement, these hard-won rights have been denied us. How can we defend ourselves?

Answer: I have had many similar complaints from the Chimps for a Good Old Smoke Organisation, the Flankton Against the Dolphin group, and Friends of the Bamboo-Shoot, who are doing such a terrific job in their fight against the giant panda. Only when Green Awareness is curtailed will these alternative voices be heard. We must fight on!

Greer's second go

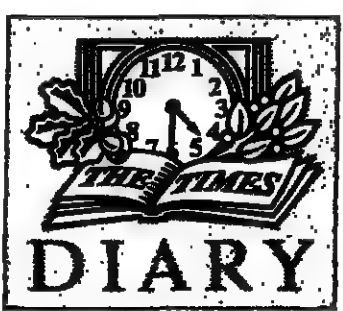
HAVING failed in her attempt to become the Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, Germaine Greer has another venerable academic institution in her sights. The author of *The Female Eunuch* has been shortlisted to succeed Sir Claus Moser as warden of Wadham College, Oxford, next year.

Eminently qualified, Greer, who lectures part-time at Newnham College, Cambridge, would, at least, be a popular choice with undergraduates. The students' union only last week passed a resolution outlining the qualities sought in Moser's successor. "The new warden should be an individual equally committed to educational reform and to fighting the government's position on funding



for education," declared the motion, and should show concern "with Wadham's admission policy and improving representation of female, ethnic minority and state-school students".

Ros Wynne-Jones, president of the Wadham students' union, says: "Many of us want a woman warden, one who is strong enough



to get all the men under control. Germaine Greer is admirably qualified to do that."

Greer proved too much for the Sidney Sussex academics who felt she was too iconoclastic for their high table. Greer, whose book *The Change* is favourite to win the Fawcett Society Prize for feminist literature in London tomorrow, was dismissive of her defeat in Cambridge. "Who would want to be mistress of the dulllest college in Cambridge?" Wadham might be a different proposition. The job comes with a 16th-century apartment, set in its own private grounds in the shadow of the college.

Lady Warnock, recently retired as mistress of Girton, Cambridge, is enthusiastic about the idea of a woman warden at Wadham. "If we are going to have mixed common rooms and research fellows who are men and women, it is right that more of the principals should be women, too." So she is a Greer supporter? "I would not vote for her. But I would certainly vote for another woman."

Older readers of the Financial Times may have had a sensation of déjà vu on reading Malcolm Rutherford's review of Venus observed at the Chichester Festival Theatre last week. In one of the new production's few decent no-

tices, Rutherford commended outstanding performance by Valerie Taylor and Heather Stannard. Alas, Taylor is dead and Stannard has not been heard of in many years. They were the stars of the original 1950 production, playing opposite Laurence Olivier. "I was working very quickly in poor light and I had a copy of the original 1950 programme open beside the current programme," explains a contrite Rutherford. The last production he reviewed for the paper was A Slip of the Tongue earlier this month. And yes, it appeared without mishap.

Down to earth

TWENTY years ago earth summits were nothing like as grand. Back in Stockholm in June, 1972, only one prime minister, India's Indira Gandhi, could be bothered to turn up. The British flag was flown by Peter Walker, then environment secretary, while the Soviet Union and most of the Eastern bloc boycotted the event. There were just 1,500 delegates compared with 12,000 in Rio.

Despite the inauspicious beginnings, Maurice Strong, the Stockholm conference secretary-general, pledged to hold a second earth summit in the 1990s. True to his word he is now the mastermind behind the Rio conference.

Walker recalls of Stockholm: "It was the first environmental conference in history and Britain played a special role. We were the first to have a secretary of state for the environment and everyone wanted to talk to me about how to set up an environment department." Others have a different recollection of Britain's role. Walker's biggest victory, they point out, was in getting a debate about the environmental impact of Concorde knocked off the agenda.

Tales from a tent

TWO survivors of the very first season were among those braving the elements in Regent's Park last night as the Open Air Theatre celebrated the opening of its diamond jubilee year. Among the audience were Margaretta Scott, 80, and Leslie French, 88, who played Viola and Feste respectively in the "black and white" production of *Twelfth Night* that opened park productions in 1932.

"They just put a few deckchairs out, found a slope for the stage and off we went," says Scott. French and Scott have been regulars ever since. Veterans of many a sudden performance, both favour a return of the marquee where the action used to transfer in bad weather. Not that the tent was problem-free. French recalls one occasion when a *Midsummer Night's Dream* transferred to the marquee, only for the moon to reappear in minutes and the actors to resume *al fresco*. No one told Helena, being played by Marita Hunt. As all awaited her entrance they heard a voice in the tent. "Oh weary night, oh long and tedious night. Where is everybody?"

Punters having a flutter on the Derby may also consider a wager on the future of Canary Wharf, being resolved at Epsom tomorrow. Representatives of most of the central players are expected, including Lord White, the Al-Maktoums, and Mrs Thatcher, in many ways Canary Wharf's principal architect. They have a link: Sir Tim Bell, the PR guru, who has worked with each and, until last week, also acted for the Reichmann brothers — at an annual fee of £500,000, according to PR Week. Bell, however, has avoided accusations of divided loyalties. He has taken himself off to Australia for the week.



NURSING DEMOCRACY

China's relationship with the West has settled into an unhappy marriage of convenience as the third anniversary of Tiananmen Square approaches this week. Peking continues to be granted most-favoured-nation trading status in return for its not standing in the way of Western diplomatic designs at the United Nations.

China's agreement to abide by sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, in spite of its abstention on the actual vote, indicates the value of Washington's hear-no-evil, see-no-evil policy towards China in doing business in the security council. Britain, as an architect of the sanctions resolution, also benefited. But in the longer term Whitehall has to be careful that gaining China's assistance in righting Europe's wrongs must not be at the expense of the people of Hong Kong.

British policy towards Hong Kong appears to be moving into a more fluid phase. Before the elections last September, Martin Lee and his fellow United Democrats of Hong Kong were told by the British that further progress toward democracy would be considered if the elections were successful. With candidates he supported now occupying 12 of the available 18 seats on the Legislative Council, the election was successful for Mr Lee by any measure. The arrival of Chris Patten as the colony's new governor offers an opportunity to give Hong Kong's Chinese more say in their own government.

A recent opinion poll showed that 83 per cent of respondents expected more democracy from Mr Patten. That such a poll is necessary in the 1990s is in itself a grim comment on past British rule.

The Foreign Office tactic until now has been to handle Peking with the softest of kid gloves. Its case has been that there is no point in asking for changes to China's basic law for governing Hong Kong after 1997 if such requests will simply be refused. Antagonising Peking at this stage, the Foreign Office has contended, could even jeopardise China's commitment, to respect Hong Kong's autonomy and basic rights, when it takes over. Thus Chinese demands on matters strictly outside the joint declaration, such as the airport, have been complied with. The

British government may pass judgment on repression engaged in by other members of the Commonwealth or protest to Bangkok about undemocratic abuses there. But the penny seems to be dropping that by denying Hong Kong's Chinese the opportunity to build themselves a protective wall of democracy, Britain is doing little to prevent similar occurrences in Hong Kong after 1997.

The declaration of 1984 stated simply that the legislature of post-1997 Hong Kong "shall be constituted by election". To Britons the meaning of those words is clear. But elections in the People's Republic are a different matter. Mr Patten can stiffen the definition by meeting the modest target set by a consensus of members of the legislative and executive councils, for half the membership of the former to be elected by 1995. That Legislative Council will hold power through 1997, laying the foundation for the 50 years when the Chinese have said Hong Kong's special status will remain unchanged and, it is hoped, beyond.

There are various other ways of strengthening Hong Kong's democratic and judicial institutions. The appointed, functional seats on the Legislative Council could be broadened by expanding the range of professions and groups from which they come. Pressure must also be maintained for the colony to have its own court of final appeal.

So far the British government has taken the view that everything must be settled through discussions with the Chinese. Most of the above suggestions, if put to Peking, would not meet with a positive response. But dealing with China is a balance of short and long term, as every Sinologist soon learns.

Even over the last few months there have been signs that the reformers are again on the move in China, notably in the south. The old men of Peking, even they, are not immortal. The speed with which the Hong Kong hinterland in Shenzhen is developing suggests that economics may yet drive political change. These are variables, not constants, for Mr Patten to ponder. If the people of Hong Kong are ready to risk a gamble on democracy, the British can do no less than to give them every encouragement.

TO PRUNE THE STATE

Ministers have been eloquent over the last few years in urging the virtues of competitive tendering and private-sector disciplines throughout the public sector. They have usually ignored their own backyard in Whitehall. One of John Major's most welcome — and unexpected — moves since the general election has been to suggest that a more radical approach is being considered, that Whitehall may face the same pressure to organise competitive tenders and subcontract work out as town halls have already. William Waldegrave, in charge of the new Office of Public Service and Science, yesterday began to ask the awkward questions.

The thrust of changes in central government in two decades since the Heath administration has been essentially managerial, to improve efficiency by applying best-practice techniques for running large organisations. This thread has run through a series of initiatives associated with Lord Rayner and Sir Robin Ibbotson stretching back to David Howell's work for the Heath administration. They have all been within a broadly monolithic framework in which all civil servants, whatever their job, are assumed to share the same public-sector ethos and the same accountability up a hierarchic ladder leading to ministers and thus to Parliament.

Senior civil servants have been reluctant to dismantle their own empires or disturb their multifarious closed shops, operated in collusion with civil service unions. That crucially meant that national pay bargaining and terms and conditions of service have been preserved. This has distorted labour markets in areas of high unemployment.

The much-trumpeted Next Steps initiative was a half-way house, seeking to extend semi-detachment to sizable areas of work tradi-

tionally controlled and managed by Whitehall departments. Performance targets would be applied to the running of such services as social security, training and vehicle licensing. That was a step forward, particularly in identifying costs. But it has been implemented very slowly. It could never offer financial independence as long as the largest cost, pay, was centrally negotiated.

Before the election, the White Paper *Competing for Quality* suggested subjecting central services to market-testing and competitive tender. Mr Waldegrave has moved fast. Addressing a *Sunday Times* conference yesterday, he talked of applying the purchaser/producer split throughout the public sector. Not only did he propose extending competitive tendering in local authorities from blue-collar direct labour to the white-collar clerical and professional grades. He went further and suggested that a large number of central civil service jobs could be subject to competitive tender and contracted out. This would, at the very least, help to identify in-house costs. Outside consultants may win large areas of executive work.

The second condition is an end to the current system of national pay bargaining, so far resisted by the permanent secretary/civil service union cartel. Mr Waldegrave yesterday backed more local bargaining. He suggested that the recommendations of various pay-review bodies should be treated as no more than "benchmark" for pay deals negotiated locally. This phrase may have an uncomfortably 1970s ring to it. But at least a minister appears ready to pin his political reputation to implementing ideas that have so far remained mere conference fodder. And he appears to have his boss behind him.

CANTAB DISINVENTS WHEELS

Within half a century the motor car has changed from magic carpet to big bad wolf. The private wheels that at first brought unimaginable freedom of private travel have produced a monster that is destroying civilisation, and must be curbed.

In cities it is almost quicker to walk, or in London to travel by the appalling Underground, than to drive a car through the rush-hour. Yesterday Cambridge introduced an experimental ban on all vehicles in its golden central triangle of narrow streets, which cannot be widened without pulling down King's College Chapel, and other buildings that are worth more than all the internal combustion engines put together.

Bicycles, which can be almost more dangerous than cars in those old streets made for medieval pedestrians because they are silent, are included in the ban. This will spoil a picturesque feature of the town, with undergraduates no longer flying by, late for lectures on ancient boneshakers, but it will make life bearable again. Cyclists have been involved in more than two thirds of the accidents in central Cambridge in the past five years.

So the ban had to come, as it is coming in cities around the world. The automobile is the prime example of what economists call a positional good. When it was something that only a rich elite could afford, the road was an open one, and Dornford Yates' heroes could roar down it in Lagondas. There are now 21 million cars in the United Kingdom, and the number seems to be rising steeply. Driving a car into a city centre has become a frustration to self and a menace to others. The positional good has become a communal grief. Places from Glasgow to

Kingston-upon-Thames are turning their streets into pedestrian-only precincts.

In Athens and Lagos they curb the scourge by allowing cars with odd and even number-plates into the city centres on alternate days; and the curb is evaded by people getting two cars. In Milan motorists have to demonstrate a residential or other imperative need to drive into the medieval city, though a bribe is said to ease entry. In Singapore motorists bid for a limited number of licences to drive into the city centre each month. In Tokyo a motorist has to prove he or she has a legal parking space before being allowed into the centre, illegal parkers on an urban clearway are fined the equivalent of £1,000. Bans and road pricing have arrived in many German cities, and are predicted for central London within five years.

There is going to be no room for the private motor car in the city of the future. As often, Cambridge is showing the rest of the world the route. The change needs to be made in a planned and imaginative rather than a haphazard way, before the traffic seizes up in one gigantic gridlock. Areas in London such as Soho and Covent Garden should be turned into traffic-free pedestrian precincts, with essential services allowed in only in emergency or at unsocial hours. Large, cheap parking sites need to be opened around the peripheries of cities, with frequent fast public transport into the centres.

If there is to be room for bicycles in this brave new urban world, cyclists like those in Cambridge are going to have to study the road discipline and good manners of bicycling nations such as the Dutch and Danes. Urban man of the next century is going to have to learn to use his legs again.

Docklands saga: past misfortunes, proposed solutions

From Mr Lewis Herlitz

Sir, Two clear issues are buried under the Canary Wharf development, both strategic. The first is that any lack of clear and positive support from the government for rescuing the situation will encourage foreign investors to carefully but steadily reduce their investments in this country. Who will want to take long-term investment risks with a government that refuses to share that risk?

The second is that long-term development of valuable land (or industry) requires clear strategic policies and support from the government. The development of Docklands has suffered from a lack of strategic support from the government, evidenced by the fragmented development of the transport infrastructure.

This continuing lack of long-term strategy consistently erodes the ability of this country to create and sustain genuine economic growth. I no longer understand why the government does not realise that.

Sincerely,
LEWIS HERLITZ,
10 Cliff Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.
May 29.

From Mr Chris Coles

Sir, Annette Kalesky, in his analysis of the reasons behind the repeated collapse of commercial property markets ("Requiem for the ambitious 80s", May 29), left one question unasked: who leads the savings institutions towards longer-term investment in the nation and away from short-term property speculation?

The main clearing banks frequently state, "We are not in the business of venture capital". The Treasury are clearly obsessed with the international value of the pound and tight control of government expenditure. No sign of a national investment strategy here.

Michael Heseltine, as President of the Board of Trade, must surely realise that without prior investment, there is no trade. The fact is, there is no minister for investment, let alone an identifiable individual in the City, whom we could name as leader of the nation's savings institutions.

Who leads the savings institutions towards longer term investment in the nation? From where I sit, my view is of a rudderless ship. The Canary Wharf debacle can only serve to confirm this.

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS COLES,
23 Clifton Road,
Salisbury, Wiltshire.
May 29.

Death on the road

From Mr Richard Armitage

Sir, On the same day that a jury in Maidstone acquitted Mr Stephen Owen over the shooting of the driver of a lorry which killed his son (report, May 23) a jury in Lewes acquitted the driver of a "higher performance" car which killed my brother-in-law, a cyclist, of causing death by reckless driving. He was convicted of careless driving, fined and disqualified.

The driver was 18 at the time of the accident and had passed his driving test about six weeks previously at the third attempt; and it appeared that he was not familiar with the local roads.

Police forensic-science evidence based upon skid marks on the road suggested that the car's speed within a 30 mph limit was at least 60 mph, although some witnesses said they thought the speed was slower. It is for the jury to decide whether that is reckless or careless driving, but the driver's legal right to be driving such a car was beyond dispute.

I think that it is time for this right to be reviewed. Many drivers are involved in accidents in their first year after passing the driving test, as I was. If, during this period, new drivers were restricted as to their maximum driving speed and the size and power of the cars they may drive I believe that many accidents could be avoided, thereby saving the lives of victims like my brother-in-law.

Yours faithfully,
R. A. ARMITAGE,
19 Mount Pleasant Road,
Saffron Walden, Essex.
May 26.

Literature prizes

From Mr Martin Goff

Sir, I strongly applaud the setting up of the David Cohen British Literature Prize (report, May 27) and wish it every success. But your account of its being the biggest prize of all is misplaced. As you state, both Whitbread and NCR exceed the amount offered by Booker, but this indicates little about the fame of the three prizes.

The gain to the author winning the Booker has reached a level at which it would probably make little difference if the sponsor reduced its size to £5, thus matching of course the Prix Goncourt. Equally, I suspect that the amount of publicity and sales accorded to the winning and short-listed books both nationally and internationally would be unchanged.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN GOFF
(Administrator, the Booker Prize,
Book Trust,
Book House, 45 East Hill, SW18.
May 25.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

From Mr John B. J. Lidstone

Sir, I note the banks' record on lending over the last 21 years to property developers, of which Canary Wharf is but the latest example. I note their record of financing businesses based on mountains of debts and their support for Third World countries that can never repay the interest, let alone the capital. I note also that they have repeated these acts over and over again, and that they supported Maxwell in the face of his known record.

What confidence can we have that they have learned anything from history?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN LIDSTONE,
34 Tavistock Road,
Fleet, Hampshire.
May 31.

From the Editor of the

Hampstead & Highgate Express

Sir, What are we to do with a potential 40 million square feet of office space standing empty? With imagination and architectural skill, many of those office blocks, old and new, could be converted into much needed accommodation for the homeless, the displaced and those who do vital jobs such as teachers and nurses, let alone those with a penchant for perthouses.

Essential workers remain desperate because of the inability of the private rented sector to help, the nightmare complexity of the housing benefits system and the simple fact that they cannot compete in even the current depressed housing market.

The money is available in the billions unspent from the sale of council properties, before the pressure to do so becomes intolerable. Major housing associations, in particular, could put it to effective use comparatively quickly, enabling developers and the banks to enjoy some modest return on their ill-fated enterprise. And it would do economic and public good.

This government was supposedly elected to put an end to crisis management, to start managing success and, certainly as far as London is concerned, to produce a proper plan for its future in the new Europe of tomorrow. So far, evidence is hard to find.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD ISAAMAN,
Editor,
Hampstead & Highgate Express,
Marlborough House,
179-189 Finchley Road, NW3.
June 1.

Delors' Europe?

From the Spokesman for the European Commission

Sir, I was surprised to read in your editorial of May 16, "Thatcher's Europe", that "Earlier this week M Delors declared his urgent ambition to make himself federal president of all Europe, with his Commission at the centre of continent-wide political and economic decision-making."

M Delors never made such a declaration and you will be unable to find a single quotation supporting your assertion. Moreover, the Community's member governments have just signed a new treaty in Maas-

Metering and the poor

From the Director of Child Poverty Action Group

Sir, Your leader about water metering ("Economy of water", May 26) acknowledged the fears of this group and many others that metering "might hit poor families, especially those with several children". But the solution you proposed — essentially, to weight metering charges "to protect those least able to afford higher water charges" — does not seem to be high on the agenda at present.

Ofwat, for example, has argued that the difficulties which substantial users of water, including large low-income families, could face as a result of metering raise questions for government policy on benefits. This position is problematic for several reasons.

First, since 1988 the means-tested benefits system has been weighted against larger families because of the inclusion of a "family premium" (payment per family, not per child). Since 1991, child benefit has been converted to a similar structure. Thus, in two ways the social security system has been moving in a direc-

Psychical research

From Professor Emeritus

Archie E. Roy and others

Sir, Dr Nicholas Humphrey who has been appointed to the Perrott-Warrick Research Fellowship in Parapsychology now associated with Darwin College, Cambridge, appears to be lumping together all the silliest nonsense and foolish superstitions he can find and calling it parapsychology ("Ghostbuster goes to Cambridge", Life & Times, May 18).

There are real problems relating to the nature of human beings and the universe waiting to be explained and study of the paranormal could well help to shed light on them.

Some of us have had personal experiences over many years and under test conditions which we do not believe Dr Humphrey could explain. We have no doubts both of the status of psychical research as a real academic subject or of its enormous

From Mr Gilbert Tennant

Sir, Rachel Kelly draws parallels with the Défense project in Paris in your coverage of the collapse of Olympia & York (report, May 29).

The top section of La Grande Arche of that development consists of splendid exhibition areas on a large scale. Similarly, the top of the Montparnasse tower in Paris consists of a restaurant and a viewing platform. By contrast, a visitor to Canary Wharf cannot gain access unless he has specific business with one of the tenants.

Could not some public use be made of the empty top floors in this way if only temporarily — perhaps in the form of an art gallery — to bring life and interest to the area outside office hours?

Yours faithfully,
GILBERT TENNANT,
10 Groveside, Bookham, Surrey.

From Mr John Hustler

Sir, The infrastructure controversy surrounding Docklands seems to concentrate on an expensive and long-term solution to the problem — namely, the Jubilee Line extension. For those working there now, or who will shortly move there, there is a cheaper and speedier solution.

The Riverbus, partly owned by O&Y, runs a good but infrequent service which is expensive because the route is not covered by Travelcard. If London Underground were given the resources to purchase the service and increase the frequency within the Travelcard, access to the Isle of Dogs would be easier for many.

Yours truly,
JOHN HUSTLER,
Ripley House,
Liphook, Hampshire.
June 1.

From Mr David B. Ellis

Sir, "Would any of you think of building a tower without first sitting down and calculating the cost, to see whether he could afford to finish it?" "Otherwise, if he has laid its foundation and then is not able to complete it, all the onlookers will laugh at him." "There's the man", they will say, "who started to build and could not finish."

(Luke XIV, 28-30, New English Bible).

Yours etc.,
DAVID B. ELLIS,
23 Kingscroft Road,
Leatherhead, Surrey.
May 28.

Business letters, page 21

trict and much remains to be done after the British and 11 other national parliaments have ratified the treaty in order to ensure that the Maastricht agreement works.

M Delors continues to believe that now is not the time to decide for further reform of the EC's institutions. This is in line with the treaty itself which contains a review clause for 1996.

Yours sincerely,
BRUNO DETHOMAS,
Spokesman, Commission of the European Communities,
Rue de la Loi 200,
Brey 06/66,
B-1049 Brussels.

tion counter to that needed to compensate large, low-income families for additional water charges.

There is also a limit to the capacity of the benefits system — in particular, means-tested benefits — to absorb additional "market-led" costs for claimants. Many families, for a variety of complex reasons, do not claim the benefits due to them and so would not gain access to such compensation. And the history of housing benefit in recent years is not a good precedent.

Council rents were raised to "market" levels, with the promise that the poor would be compensated via housing benefits; then, when the numbers claiming the benefit rose significantly, the government argued that it was too generous and implemented drastic cuts.

Whilst CPAG believes that the benefits system should include rebates for water charges for those on low incomes, the initial charging system itself must also be a fairer one than water metering.

Yours,
FRAN BENNETT, Director,
Child Poverty Action Group,
4th Floor, 1-5 Bath Street, EC1.
May 28.

and fundamental importance both to science and philosophy.

The open-minded study of facts of experience which do not fit the mental models (theories) of current science is the way science has always advanced and the way it will continue to advance in the future.

We had hoped that the day was long past when academics not noted for their wide experience of psychical research could feel free to dismiss it in a manner that would damage their reputation if applied to any other scientific discipline. Sadly we seem to have been mistaken.

Yours etc.,
ARCHIE E. ROY (President, the Society for Psychical Research),
JOHN BELOFF,
ARTHUR J. ELLISON,
ALAN GAULD
(Past presidents, SPR),
40 Highburgh Road,
Glasgow.
May 22.

Foresters with an eye to a view

From the President of the Institute of Chartered Foresters

Sir, Your treatment of the call by the Forestry Industry Committee of Great Britain (FICGB) for a new forestry strategy (reports, May 20), rather missed the point.

Foresters have long been aware of the capacity of woodlands to deliver benefits ranging from timber production to enhancing the view. The industry is, I suggest, ahead of any other in its acceptance of environmental principles.

Foresters thought of sustained management centuries ago. The work of the Forestry Commission and the private sector in this last century has been to redress, with a variety of motives, the depredations of the last two thousand years. Few countries can claim, as can the UK, to have more than doubled their surface area devoted to forestry during the 20th century.

The form of this forest has been a response to policies and pressures which pushed towards timber production: nothing wrong with that in a country which spends £7 billion a year on timber imports and which enjoys some of the best growing conditions in Europe. Indeed the forests formed in the Forties and Fifties now produce the fibres from which pages such as yours are constructed. Every morning millions of Britons study British-grown and processed sitka spruce avidly as they read their morning papers.

To claim that this useful tree species is widely hated is, I suggest, like saying that the British public hate barley, when most of an urban population could identify neither. They are rightly suspicious in both forest and farm of uncompromising commerce. In Britain's forests at least this no longer exists.

The range of agencies calling for more forests is endless. Some of them want community forests, leafy broadleaved woodlands managed entirely for wildlife or public recreation. Some want forests to replace arable farming. Some, realistically enough, want a development of our very successful commercial, coniferous forests. FICGB and the forestry profession accept and welcome all these requirements and the whole range of intermediates, but identify a need for a strategic plan, backed up by realistic grant or fiscal support where necessary, to achieve all this.

Reference to a "tax loophole", and to "alien" conifers betray a prejudice which has been left far behind by the current debate on forests for the future and which contributes less than nothing to public understanding of that debate.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID W. G. TAYLOR,
President,
Institute of Chartered Foresters,
7a St Colme Street, Edinburgh 3.
May 21.

Rejoining Unesco

From Sir Yehudi Menuhin

Sir, In a letter published in your issue of May 28 a few enlightened politicians urged the UK to rejoin Unesco after its seven-year sojourn in the desert. It is indeed important to work from within this nobly conceived institution to restore it to its original concept, a non-political organisation composed of people distinguished in their own right, as was indeed its first president, Julian Huxley.

Unesco was thus conceived to be the counterpart and the complement to the United Nations, which is a purely political body. As a result of USA and USSR pressures, this policy was torpedoed. Every member of Unesco was a political appointment rather than a cultural nomination. This was true especially of the higher echelon.

Despite this mortal handicap, much good has been achieved and wonderful, essential projects fulfilled. I could testify to this during and after the six years I was president of the International Music Council, a non-governmental body attached to Unesco (October 1969 to September 1975).

It is time that the director-general, Dr Federico Mayor, an excellent man, with the help of such enlightened politicians as those who signed the letter, restored Unesco to the educational, scientific and cultural communities of the world for whom it was originally intended.

Yours faithfully,
YEHUDI MENUHIN,
65 Chester Square, SW1.
May 28.

Cavalier treatment

From Mr Greg Masters

Sir, My employer provides a Vauxhall Cavalier that I may undertake my professional responsibilities. The Inland Revenue deducts from my salary income tax in respect of this vehicle on a scale that is determined by its purchase price, engine size and annual mileage.

Can I safely assume that a similar scheme of taxation will be applied to any individual who, for their business purposes, is fortunate enough to be furnished with a 200-seat TriStar? ("Major may gain official aircraft", May 28)?

Yours faithfully,
GREG MASTERS,
Kurrirrine, Chapel Lane,
Bagshot, Surrey.
May 29.

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idence offer, page 2
Law Times, page 2

Life in the legal profession
has its hazardous
moments, David Pannick
writes
Pages 25-27

THE SOUND

US dollar
1.8242 (-0.0070)
German mark
2.9357 (-0.0025)
Exchange index
92.7 (-0.2)
Bank of England official
discount (4.0%)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
2104.7 (-9.4)
FT-SE 100
2697.6 (-10.0)
New York Dow Jones
3390.14 (-6.74)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
18004.11 (-343.64)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10%
3-month Interbank 10 1/4-10 3/4
3-month eligible bills 9 1/4-9 3/4
US Prime Rate 6 1/4%
Federal Funds 3 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.74-3.72%
30-year bonds 100 1/2-100 3/4

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
£ \$1.8225
£ \$1.8225
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GOLD

London: New York:
£ \$336.80 pm-336.85
£ \$337.10-337.50 (185.00-185.50)
New York:
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NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jun) 52.00 bid (52.00-52.00)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 138.8 April (1997=100)
* Excludes midday trading price

BUSINESS TIMES

SPORT
31-34

TUESDAY JUNE 2 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

Bank of England freezes \$400m of Yugoslav assets

By NEIL BENNETT
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Bank of England has ordered British banks to freeze all Serbian and Montenegrin assets as part of the sweeping sanctions against the remaining members of the Yugoslav federation.

The order came into effect at midnight last night, freezing an estimated \$400 million in gold, securities and deposits. Throughout the day, banks worked to identify all their Yugoslav assets and take action against them. The Bank of England has set up an emergency department to handle enquiries about the freeze. The order complies with the sanctions against

Serbia agreed by the United Nations Security Council on Saturday.

The order excludes individual assets, allowing people to use their bank accounts normally. The Bank of England is believed to have warned banks last week about the impending order, to give them time to prepare their books. The decision to introduce the freeze at midnight prevented any fund transfers being caught half-completed.

The worst-hit institution was the Anglo-Yugoslav Bank in the City, the only Yugoslavian-owned bank in Britain, which was founded in 1980 to foster trade relations between the two countries. Michael Cowdery, the deputy managing director,

said that more than £10 million of the bank's assets had been frozen, including deposits from the National Bank of Yugoslavia.

Mr Cowdery said the bank had worked through the weekend to identify affected assets. The assets of Beogradiska Banka, Anglo-Yugoslav Bank's majority shareholder, have been frozen, although Anglo-Yugoslav can still do business with some of its smaller shareholders, including Privredna and Zagrebacka Banka in Croatia.

Mr Cowdery said his bank had been prepared for the order and had worked closely with supervisors from the Bank of England. "If we had been caught with our

trousers down it would not have been very professional. It is business as usual but we cannot do business with Serbia and Montenegro," he said.

The Anglo-Yugoslav bank held a briefing on the freeze for executives from the City representative offices of Ljubljanska Banka, Vojvodjanska Banka and Jugobanka yesterday morning.

British banks said they had frozen all inter-bank assets and were examining contingent liabilities to Yugoslav companies to ensure the freeze was enforced fully.

One banker said the sums involved were only tens of thousands of pounds, as trade with Yugoslavia has declined since the war broke out. Figures from the trade and

industry department show that Britain exported goods, mainly telecommunications and electrical equipment, worth £260 million to Yugoslavia last year while imports were worth £189 million.

The British action is being followed by similar moves throughout the world. In Germany, Jürgen Möllemann, the economics minister, said he plans to introduce a similar order today, while France is studying a freeze. A spokesman for the French finance ministry said it was having difficulty separating public and private assets but insisted the government would comply with the UN's sanctions.

Ambassador to leave, page 1

Falling house prices trap 2m borrowers

By SARA MCCONNELL

AT LEAST 278,000 first-time buyers have mortgages larger than the current values of their properties, according to official figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

A report to be published next week by UBS Phillips & Drew, the securities house, says that if second-time buyers, those remortgaging and those in arrears are included in the calculation, almost 2 million people have liabilities that exceed their assets.

Falling house prices in the past three years, particularly in southeast England, mean many borrowers who bought at the top of the market, and who took out loans for most

or all of the value of the properties, now have mortgages that exceed the current values.

John Wriglesworth, author of the UBS Phillips & Drew report, *The Debt Trap*, says first- and second-time buyers with "negative equity" in their properties number more than 1 million.

The figures, compiled by the Council of Mortgage Lenders, concentrate on first-time buyers. Bob Pannell, the council's under-secretary, said that although 600,000 first-time buyers — out of a total of 1.8 million who bought between 1988 and 1991 — had seen falls in the values of their homes, "for many of these buyers the fall in price has been small and

this is reflected in the much lower estimate, 278,000, of those now facing a negative equity situation". The council represents the providers of 95 per cent of mortgages.

Homeowners in southeast England have been hit hardest because this is where house prices have fallen furthest. The council calculates that 103,000 homeowners in the region, excluding London, have negative equity in their properties. The average fall in value is £2,843. The figures are based on prices in the first quarter of 1992.

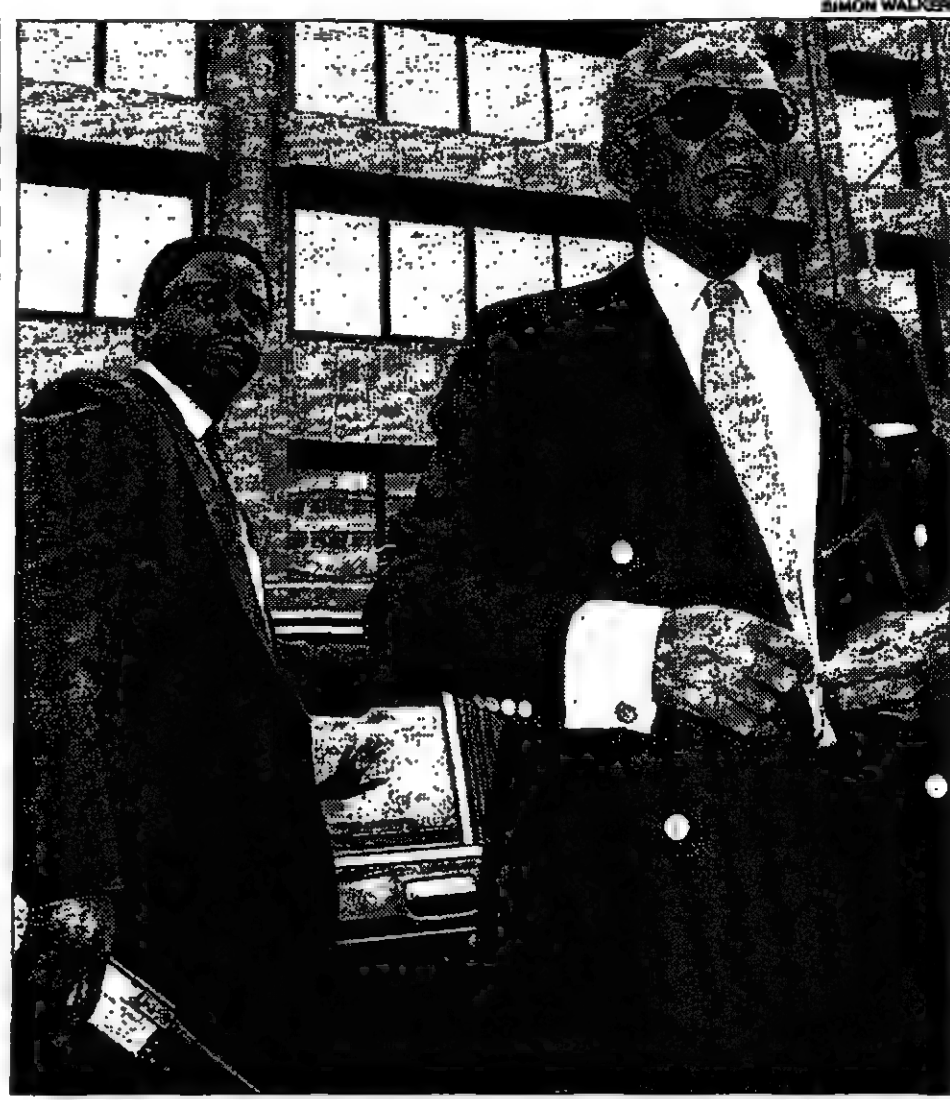
Mr Wriglesworth, however, described the council's figures as a "gross underestimate", because they did not take into account second-time buyers, those remortgaging or those in arrears. He said: "Around one third of total lending is further advances." He also argued that the impact of transaction costs on the market should be included. Borrowers typically spend about £3,000 on fees when moving and many use equity in their existing properties to cover the costs.

UBS Phillips & Drew used the Halifax house price index for its calculations. This is derived from data based on the Halifax's 14 per cent share of the housing market. Mr Wriglesworth said it was more broadly based than the 5 per cent sample survey of building society mortgage completions used by the council.

House prices rose 0.6 per cent in May, according to Nationwide Building Society's monthly house price index. This is the second time in succession that the index has recorded a month-on-month rise. The society said it was "too early to speculate that this is a sign of a general sustainable improvement".

The average UK house price is now £55,924, £359 more than last month's average. House prices in May were 5.1 per cent lower than a year previously.

Lenders pressed, page 7
Business letters, page 21



Whistle stop tour: David Dinkins (right) the mayor of New York, in London

Big Apple given the hard sell

By RODNEY HOBSON

RECESSION-HIT New York, where falling property values are causing Olympia & York as much anguish as Canary Wharf, is turning its problems to its own advantage. David Dinkins, the mayor, and a team of 15 top company executives from the city are in London with the message: if you think rents have dropped here, they are still twice what you would pay in New York.

Mr Dinkins is also visiting four cities in France and Germany, with a speech that puts American tourists to shame. The aim is to promote New York as an international business centre that will give European firms without an American presence the chance to establish themselves across the Atlantic.

Mr Dinkins said: "New York is the richest market place on this planet with a combined personal income of \$300 billion and a retail buying power of \$70 billion. New York is a key centre of international trade, communications, finance and tourism."

As mayor of a city with

more than 7 million residents and a budget of \$30 billion, Mr Dinkins is reckoned to have the second most challenging job in America. He said: "In many industries, a leading company can hardly afford not to have a presence in the Big Apple."

His financial services powerhouse provides the highest level of municipal services of any city in America, he added.

ed. Mr Dinkins scorned the doom-mongers who paint the city as "a world capital in decline, a financial services dinosaur that is being eclipsed by remote suburbs filled with tax machines and computer networks".

Nor is he averse to a dig at other American cities. Crime went down 4 1/2 per cent last year compared with a sharp rise elsewhere in the country.

First jobs to go at Canary Wharf

By ANGELA MACKAY

ERNST & Young, appointed administrator to Canary Wharf last week, is expected today to announce the first redundancies among the project's staff.

Olympia & York, Canary Wharf's parent, employs about 400 people and up to one third of these are expected to lose their jobs today. Last week, Stephen Adamson and Nigel Hamilton, two of the administrators, spoke to staff at Canary Wharf and told them they would be kept informed of events but no guarantees of employment were given.

Canary Wharf's bankers, owed almost £600 million, have agreed to provide £10 million to keep the project ticking over but this money will expire in ten days unless costs are cut drastically.

The administrators are also set to meet Cabinet members to discuss tax incentives and any other measures that could be granted to help save the project. So far, the government has appeared reluctant to provide more cash. However, there is a growing possibility that at least 2,000 civil servants will be relocated to Canary Wharf by the end of the year.

Tenants and their representatives will start meetings with administrators tomorrow. They want to settle various issues, including whether the administrators will pay to maintain the development at its current high standard and whether Ernst & Young will honour incentives promised by O&Y to encourage companies to lease space.

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Company failures save accountants

By OUR CITY STAFF

AN unprecedented number of corporate collapses have saved Britain's big six accountancy firms from a poor year. Stale audit and consultancy fees and a dip in demand for consultancy services took the shine off the results.

Arthur Andersen, the smallest of the big six, recorded the biggest rise in fee income from its British operations for the second year running. Touche Ross saw the largest rise in income from corporate recovery work.

Income figures for the firms cover financial years varying from end-March to end-April. They are released at the same time to make comparisons easier.

However, some of the firms are privately accusing their competitors of restating their figures in order to spread gains between different departments.

Touche Ross, receivers to the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, saw fee income from insolvency work

leap 40 per cent to £41.4 million on the figures available. Insolvency work included BCCI, Polly Peck and Brent Walker.

Cork Gully, the insolvency arm of Coopers & Lybrand, dealt with more receiverships than any of its competitors. Fee income from insolvency rose 16 per cent to £74 million. Insolvency work included Polly Peck International, Thames International, owner of Windsor Safari Park, and Astra Holdings, the defence group.

KPMG's corporate recovery practice saw fee income rise 38 per cent to £50.6 million. Assignments included the collapse of Air Europe. At Price Waterhouse, administrators to Maxwell Communication Corporation, the corporate recovery and insolvency arm made £38.6 million (£27.6 million).

Corporate recovery work at Ernst & Young rose 17.5 per cent to £34.3 million. Arthur Andersen's fee income from corporate recovery was £18 million.

Lagerfeld fashions £16m deal

By JON ASHWORTH

KARL Lagerfeld, the German-born fashion king who turned the House of Chanel on its head, has sold up to Alfred Dunhill. The Diet Coke sipping darling of the catwalk is selling his Paris-based women's fashion house and the Lagerfeld brandname to Dunhill Holdings in a deal worth up to £16 million.

The deal will add Lagerfeld to Dunhill's range of luxury brands, which includes Mont Blanc pens and Chloe fashions. It will give Dunhill the Lagerfeld shop in Boulevard St Honoré in Paris along with a string of international boutiques and franchises.

"Kaiser Karl", as he is sometimes known, will become the designer for Chloe, the French fragrance and fashion house, which he transformed before its acquisition by Dunhill in 1985.

Lord Douro, chairman of Dunhill Holdings, said the deal marked a determined push by the company into the world of female fashion. He said: "This acquisition is evidence of our strategic objective to have a significant



Catwalk coup: Karl Lagerfeld will design for Chloe and luxury goods at boutiques and duty free outlets a year, more than twice the amount spent through the Chloe chain.

"We have Chloe: this is a second name in the market," said Lord Douro, who adds that Mr Lagerfeld will continue designing for Chanel in

addition to working for Dunhill on the Chloe and Lagerfeld collections.

Dunhill will not say how much it is paying for the Lagerfeld name. All it will say is that the deal amounts to less than 10 per cent of the group's net cash balances of £160.3 million at the last count. The Lagerfeld deal will make Dunhill and its associates more cosmopolitan than ever. Dunhill is 57 per cent owned by Rothmans International, the tobacco group, which in turn has a 46.5 per cent stake in Cartier, the jeweller. Rothmans is 63 per cent owned by Richmond, the Swiss registered investment vehicle for the South African Rupert family.

Mr Lagerfeld will cut a dashing figure among the gold cigarette lighters and pipe-smokers' accessories in Dunhill's St James's showroom. Typically clad in black and sunglasses, he is credited with taking the House of Chanel and flinging it into the mainstream of world fashion. His "reinvention" of the Chanel suit prompted a flurry of gilt-burtoned cardigan style suits in the British high street in the 1980s.

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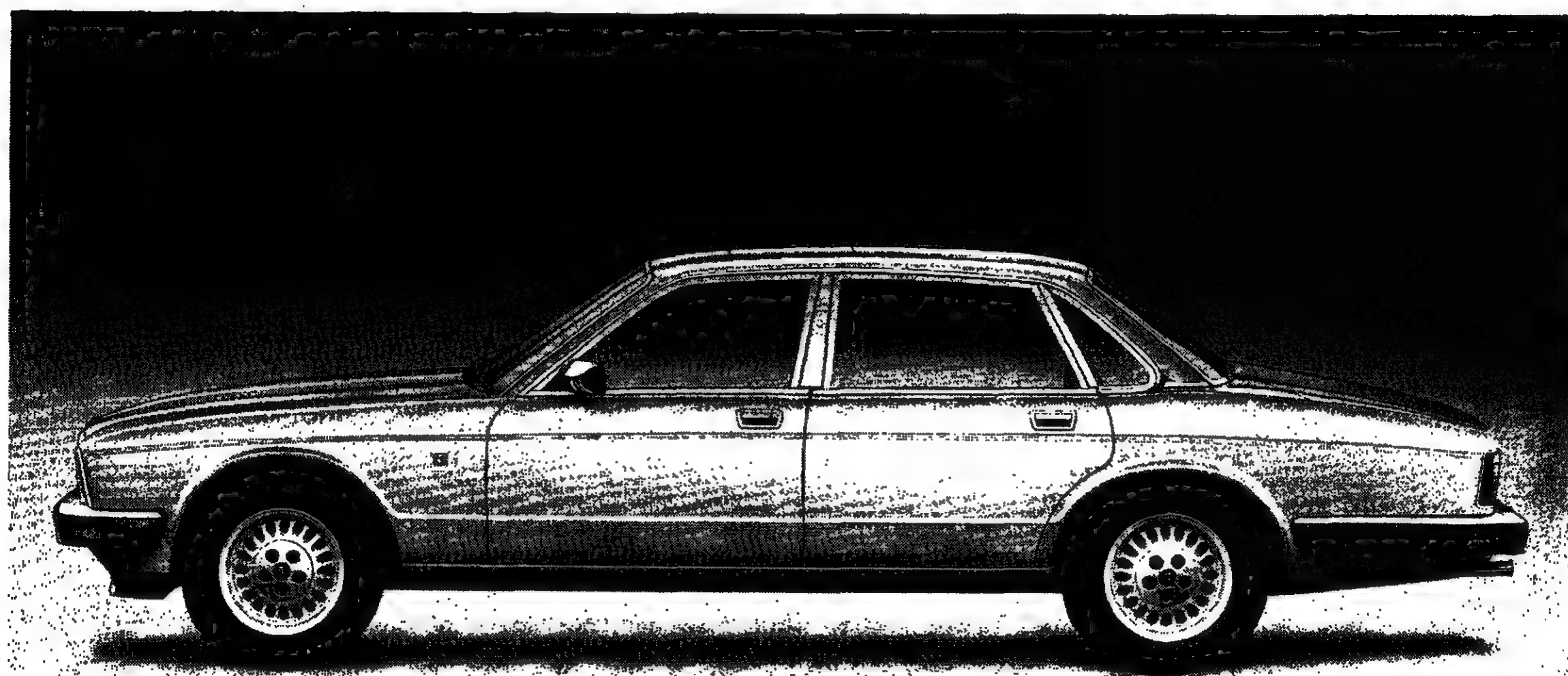
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Rolls forms power alliance

By ROSS TYEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ROLLS-ROYCE has formed a strategic alliance with Westinghouse of America to challenge for leadership of the fast growing worldwide market for gas-burning power stations. The deal will form the basis of a long-term alliance between four leading power engineering groups under which they will share technology and markets.

The partners will work with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries of Japan and FiatAvio of Italy to offer a complete range of power generation plants, fuelled by natural gas, aviation fuel, coal and oil.

Frank Bakos, vice-president of the Westinghouse power generation business, called it the "wave of the future in delivering reliable, low-cost products to the world market". Under a technology transfer deal, Rolls-Royce aeroplanes

will form the basis for a range of combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) plants, using both gas turbine and steam technology.

The agreement poses a serious threat to General Electric of America, which, in alliance with GEC Alsthon, the Anglo-French electrical engineering group, has been emerging as the dominant player in CCGT manufacture. ABB, the Swedish-Swiss group that partners Rolls in the UK market for CCGTs, has also been suffering from the GE/GEC Alsthon alliance.

In a joint statement, Rolls and Westinghouse said they had concluded a 15-year agreement covering development of combustion turbine technology and marketing of gas turbine and combined cycle plants.

Rolls will provide Westinghouse and its existing partners, Mitsubishi and FiatAvio, with turbine expertise acquired in the design of aeroplanes. Technology for steam turbines, combustion turbines and combined cycle plants will be transferred in turn to Rolls-Royce.

The accord should strengthen substantially long-term prospects for Rolls-Royce industrial power group companies, which employ 20,000 worldwide. The group is based on the former NEI power engineering business, merged with Rolls' industrial and marine engines, and its nuclear power station expertise.

BSG wins Boeing contract

BSG International, an automotive and consumer products and vehicle distribution company, has won a \$90 million contract to supply 670 lavatory modules for Boeing 737 aircraft over the next four years.

The contract secures the jobs of the 800 employees at BSG's plant in Camberley, Surrey. Two or three modules per aircraft will be supplied, depending on the design of the individual machine.

Profit doubles

Reduced operating costs helped Midlands Radio to achieve a 97.1 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £605,000 in the six months to March 31. Turnover at the independent broadcasting group rose 7.6 per cent to £5.31 million. The interim dividend is maintained at 1.5p.

Airport offer

An international offer of shares in the privatisation of Vienna airport closed early because of high demand. The offer will raise 1.8 billion schillings (£87 million) to finance the airport's expansion. About three fifths of the shares are being placed in Austria, the rest abroad.

JLI purchase

JLI, a food distribution and processing group, formerly known as Jack L. Israel, is acquiring Cadeac, a Birmingham-based edible nut processor, for £1.4 million. Cadeac made operating profits of £300,000 on sales of £8 million in the year to March 31. JLI's shares firmed 1p to 138p.

EC go-ahead

The European Commission has cleared the way for Asea Brown Boveri, the Swiss-Swedish engineering group, to double its stake in Brel, a UK railway equipment supplier, to 80 per cent. ABB wants to acquire the 40 per cent held by Trafalgar House, the construction group.

Blenheim buys

Blenheim Group, the trade fairs and exhibitions company, has acquired two franchise magazines from CGB Publishing for £420,000. They are *Business Franchise Magazine* and *The Franchise Handbook*.



Food for thought: Peter Matthews, chief executive, reports tough competition and depressed spending

Consumer caution dents Cullens profit

CULLENS Holdings, which operates a chain of neighbourhood food stores, made pre-tax profits of £608,000 (£825,000) in the year to March 1. The company's operating profit rose but earnings from the sale of franchises fell from £731,000 to £484,000.

A higher tax charge helped to clip net earnings from 2.8p to 1.5p a share. Peter Mat-

thews, chief executive, said trading conditions had been difficult, with depressed consumer spending, greater emphasis by other retailers on pricing, Sunday trading and extended opening hours.

Retail activities contributed £509,000 (£365,000) to gross profits of £977,000 (£1.02 million). Net rentals received fell from £653,000 to

£468,000. The one dividend payment for the year is maintained at 0.5p.

Because potential franchisees are likely to face continued difficulty in raising funds, the level of franchise profits this year is unpredictable.

Of Cullens' 27 neighbourhood food stores, 14 operate under the company's franchising plan. Several openings are

planned in the next few months.

A prototype patisserie/cafe was opened in Holland Park, west London, last September, and more are planned. Mr Matthews said. Another new concept was a chicken and ribs restaurant recently opened in Chiswick, also west London. The group said it had no debt.

US manufacturing sets best monthly rise in four years

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

AMERICAN manufacturing last month showed its fastest monthly rise in nearly four years, according to the index of the National Association of Purchasing Management.

The index, registering its fourth consecutive monthly gain, jumped to 56.3 per cent in May from 51.3 in April. Readings of more than 50 per cent indicate an expanding economy.

The stronger than expected data provided fresh encouragement that the American recovery is becoming more established again after the patchy progress indicated in other data.

The association's employment index in May showed 49.1 per cent, its best reading for more than three years,

although it still did not indicate a rise in employment. In April, the jobs index was 43.9 per cent. Prices rose in May for the first time in 17 months, to 56.2 per cent, from 49.6 per cent.

Mark Cliffe, chief economist at Nomura Research Institute, said that the strength of the association's figures was to be seen across the board, with the improved jobs index likely to prompt Wall Street economists to revise upwards their jobs forecasts for this month.

The association's index has shown considerable volatility in the past, but the May figures appeared to be consistent with a modest recovery in America, he said. The association estimates that, during the first five months,

real domestic growth was 2.8 per cent on an annual basis.

The Federal Reserve Board is now less likely to want lower interest rates.

Market reports that the Bank of Japan engaged in heavy dollar selling for the fourth trading day in a row yesterday reinforced currency dealers' view that Tokyo is preparing the ground for an interest rate cut to boost the Japanese economy.

The pursuit of a stronger yen has been linked by government officials to a desire to cut Japan's huge and politically sensitive trade surplus with America by making American imports cheaper and Japanese exports dearer. The currency, at ¥126.65, is at its lowest since mid-February.

Celestion sells audio division

By PHILIP PANGALOS

CELESTION Industries, a clothing, swimwear and audio group, is disposing of Celestion Audio, its loudspeaker division, to Kinergistics for £3.1 million.

Audio was responsible for much of the group's taxable loss of £1.06 million in 1991. Its operating profits tumbled to £76,000 (£1.2 million) in the year to December 31, on sales of £13.6 million (£15.6 million). The division was, and still is, loss-making after interest.

Kinergistics, an investment company controlled by GP Venture Capital, assumes Audio's net borrowings of about £1.6 million. The disposal will bring in £4.7 million and help to reduce Celestion's gearing, which was 42 per cent in December, to about 20 per cent.

Charles Ryder, Celestion's chief executive, said the group would concentrate on its clothing business. Celestion shares firmed 2p to 58p.

Hanson sues Placer

By PHILIP ROBINSON

HANSON, the Anglo-American conglomerate, claims it was duped out of almost £200 million worth of gold last year when it sold land in Nevada to Placer Dome, a Canadian mining company that owned adjoining property.

Hanson is suing Placer for fraud, breach of contract and racketeering, alleging that it

failed to disclose a drilling report showing a gold seam extending from its own land to Hanson's.

The value of the land deal was never disclosed, but the purchase price is understood to have been far below the value of the gold on Hanson's side of the fence, estimated at £188 million.

Ford cuts chief's pay

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

DEREK Barron, former chairman of Ford of Britain, suffered a drop in salary of more than £55,600 in his final year as the company slumped to its worst financial losses. The annual report and accounts shows that Mr Barron paid heavily for the poor performance, with his salary cut from £214,086 in 1990 to

£158,454 last year. As he suffered a near-26 per cent cut, 29,000 manual workers were enjoying one of their best-ever pay rises worth an average increase of 13.4 per cent during last year.

Ford failed to predict and react to the slump with losses jumping to more than £11 million a week in the UK.

Edwards sees future for coal

By ROSS TYEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE jobs of more than 10,000 miners could be saved because of constraints on Britain's electricity transmission system, the former commercial director of British Coal Corporation said.

Malcolm Edwards told a coal industry seminar that the need to retain spare capacity on tap would limit the substitution of gas-fired power stations for coal plants, ensuring that future demand for coal was up to 10 million tonnes higher than widely expected. A spokesman for the Na-

tional Grid Company, which runs the transmission grid, confirmed Mr Edwards' calculations.

Government advisers have argued that a "dash for gas" in the wake of electricity privatisation could reduce British Coal to only 14 pits by the mid-1990s. However, the need for a cushion of coal or oil plant was "flagged" in the Grid's seven-year statement, the spokesman said.

Improved prospects for the coal industry will ease the government's task of drawing up a credible structure for the privatisation of British Coal. Mr Edwards' warning is

likely to reinforce the belief that some groups developing gas-fired plants could face serious financial difficulties.

Mr Edwards said many developers had calculated profitability on the assumption that their plants would run all year as part of the "baseload" supply.

However, it now looked as if as little as 5,000 megawatts of gas plant might be needed during summer demand troughs, which could seriously damage the viability of some of the 10,500 megawatts of new gas plant already licensed by the industry department, he said.



Edwards: gas limited

EC inflation rate steady at 4.8%

THE European Community's annual inflation rate was 4.8 per cent in April, the same as in the previous month, but down from 5 per cent in April, 1991, the EC statistics agency Eurostat said. The EC rate compared with 3.2 per cent for America and 2.3 per cent for Japan in April. Eurostat said consumer prices across the 12-nation European Community rose by 0.5 per cent in April, largely due to price rises in Portugal of 1.6 per cent and of 1.5 per cent in both Greece and Britain.

"The sharp increase in these three member states were offset by low to moderate rises in the consumer price indices of all the other countries," Eurostat said.

MTM extends credit

THE new management at MTM, the specialist chemicals group, has reached agreement with bankers for an extension of current facilities until January 4. Ken Schofield, the chief executive, sees reduction of debts as a key priority, and the management is reviewing activities to bring about a refinancing and ensure long-term financial survival. Banking facilities had been on a month-to-month basis. MTM shares edged ahead 1p to 48p.

CSR slashes dividend

CSR, the Australian conglomerate, is cutting its final from 16 cents to 10 cents making 20 cents (32 cents), after a year in which all its markets were hit by recession. The group's building and construction activity fell 10 per cent in Australia and 12 per cent in America. CSR's operating profit in the year ended March, before abnormal items, fell from A\$671.3 million (£280 million) to A\$423.2 million. Net profit declined 46 per cent to A\$175.3 million.

Borthwicks rises

IMPROVED margins and the elimination of the loss-making meat business helped pre-tax profits at Borthwicks, the food and natural flavourings group, jump to £1.29 million in the year to end-March compared with a taxable profit of £255,000. Turnover fell from £51.3 million to £44.4 million. Peter Brackenridge, chief executive, is confident over prospects. Dividend is raised to 1.1p (1p). The shares rose 1p to 36A/4p.

Hawthorn returns

SHARES in Hawthorn Leslie, the mobile telephone group, returned from suspension at 8/4p, which is half the November suspension price, as the group published loss-making figures of £11.5 million for the year to end-December (£13.6 million loss). There is again no dividend, and the company says it will be "some time" before payments can be resumed. Hawthorn is setting up an executive share option scheme at HL Communications.

Newspaper decline

COST cutting and "encouraging" newspaper sales failed to prevent a fall in profits at Bristol Evening Post in the year to March. Although turnover was unchanged at £61.4 million, pre-tax profits fell from £4.8 million to £4.1 million. The figures disguised a slightly better performance in the second half. At the interim stage profits were more than £1 million adrift. Staff costs fell £52,000 to £18.8 million. The final stays at 7.75p, making an unchanged 11.5p total.

TR Property trust hit

THE collapse in UK property share values is blamed for a 24.4 per cent decline in net asset value at TR Property Investment Trust, which invests in both property shares and directly in property. The company saw net asset value fall to 30.71p a share (40.61p) at the end of March. Pre-tax revenue slid to £1.31 million (£3.79 million). Earnings plunged to 0.34p a share (1.04p). A maintained 0.85p final gives a same-again 1.45p total.

Stable S African gold market helps lift Anglo American

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

DIRECTORS of Anglo American Corporation, the South African mining giant, yesterday said the conglomerate had at last pulled through the recession with marginally increased equity-accounted earnings and was well-placed to take advantage of the world upturn in economic activity.

"We like to think that gold is bouncing along the bottom now," Julian Ogilvie Thompson, the chairman, said, introducing results for the year to end-March.

There seemed to have been a significant increase in the availability of Russian gold. Production in the West was unlikely to rise and might have stabilised. The group believed diamond sales would rise marginally.

The corporation's attributable earnings increased 19.9

per cent to R1.68 billion (£327 million) from R1.4 billion but this was mainly because of an investment surplus which increased to R222 million from R47 million. Trading income, mainly from coal, fell marginally to R507 million.

Because less was spent on prospecting for gold other net income was higher at R69 million (R47 million). The group had good ore reserves that would be economic at about R40,000 a kilogramme and some that could be brought into production at R35,000 to R40,000.

The corporation announced a dividend increased 6 per cent to 345 cents a share (325 cents). The dividend was covered 2.1 times by attributable earnings.

Mr Ogilvie Thompson appeared to be reasonably opti-

mistic about the political environment in South Africa, feeling confident that the process of constitutional negotiations would be resumed. But he gave warning that unbundling the conglomerate would have detrimental effects.

The corporation announced that it was appointing Dr Mamphela Ramphele, a black woman, as a non-executive director. She is deputy vice-chancellor of Cape Town university, and was a constant companion of Steve Biko, the Black Consciousness activist, bearing him two children.

Dr Ramphele, 44, is a medical sociologist. She was the co-author of *Uprooting Poverty, The South African Challenge*.

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TI GROUP

Do not forget the investor

Andrew Large took over the chair of the Securities and Investments Board yesterday with the minimum of ceremony and the maximum of discretion. Had everything gone quite as Sir David Walker intended before he handed over the reins, this might have been a suitable posture for his successor to continue. The agenda facing the chief securities regulator will certainly feature complex lobbying and negotiation over the shape of future EC rules for financial services. Two draft directives are firmly stalled and the British view is that it would be better to have nothing than agree a formal single market that will be more bureaucratic and less internationally competitive. This view is unlikely to prevail indefinitely and the Treasury, which has just taken over responsibility from the DTI for such matters, will need to do some learning. Mr Large, with his experience of continental markets, is well placed to help push for something better.

He might not have expected the main structures for regulating the retail side of the industry, which was the main purpose of the Financial Services Act, to be completely up in the air. The reforms suggested by the Cuscas report, which was commissioned by the SIB, were essentially a response to the inadequate resources available to Fimbra, which covers the advisers to private investors whose mishaps have provided one of the principal original spurs to legislation. The plan for a single self-regulatory organisation to cover retail investors has merit but will not suffice. It seems, in particular, to answer the industry's needs of yesterday rather than the investor's needs for tomorrow. The affairs of the small man are too often being hived off, separated out and pushed to one side. There is, for instance, little answer here to the plight of pensioners in the Maxwell frauds, which has opened up the general lack of protection of pension fund members from many more mundane malpractices. Mr Large needs to focus regulation back on the consumer. To do this he may need to adopt a high profile and make himself unpopular in the industry.

Rouble ruin

Resignation of a central bank governor is often cause for alarm. In Russia, the departure of Georgy Maryukhin, after pressure against his tight money policy, looks another sure signpost on the road to ruinous hyperinflation. Smooth talking by Yegor Gaidar, the deputy prime minister, made a crucial contribution last month to persuading the IMF to accept the Russian Federation as a full member and agree to a \$24 billion package of assistance. At that time, fears were already abroad that the Russians were finding the counter-inflationary disciplines the IMF demanded too much. Mr Gaidar appeared to have convinced western finance ministers and central bankers that there would be no backsliding in Moscow.

But backsliding there has been. Figures made available on Sunday showed a dramatic acceleration in the issue of cash. The severity with which the Russian authorities restrained credit last year is to give way to a step jump in the money supply to accommodate the rise in market prices. Discontent among the long-suffering Russian folk and their parliamentary representatives has to be contained. Since controls were lifted in January, prices have risen by 300 per cent, according to Mr Gaidar. Other estimates are nearer 1,000 per cent. Politicians feared lack of cash could cripple the crucial energy industries and generate unrest. The printing presses are now rolling full speed on the road to ruin. The reform may have been too hasty. History shows that cannot be cured by feeding inflation with cash.

Hongkong Bank's

debacle at
Marine Midland
casts doubt on its
plans, writes
Neil Bennett

There is one Midland bank acquisition that the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank would prefer to forget. The purchase of Marine Midland in New York State has been one of the most traumatic episodes in the bank's history and one from which it is only beginning to recover.

Hongkong Bank's current £3.6 billion bid for Midland in Britain relies on one principal thesis. The bank believes that it can, and should, develop into a global bank with semi-autonomous operations in all the world's main financial markets.

Senior executives talk quaintly about pursuing a three-legged stool concept, with legs in Asia, America and Europe. This, they believe, will generate hundreds of millions of pounds in additional trade finance and treasury revenues, while allowing significant cost savings, particularly in technology and systems.

So it is not surprising that Hongkong Bank is keen to sweep the Marine Midland debacle under the carpet. The expensive acquisition followed by losses of almost \$500 million and radical cutbacks, casts doubt over the group's entire strategy and management strength.

All of this seemed inconceivable to Hongkong Bank in 1980 when it bought 51 per cent of Marine for \$314 million as a first step in its bold global strategy. The bank grew steadily and Hongkong bought out the minority in 1987 for a hefty \$764 million.

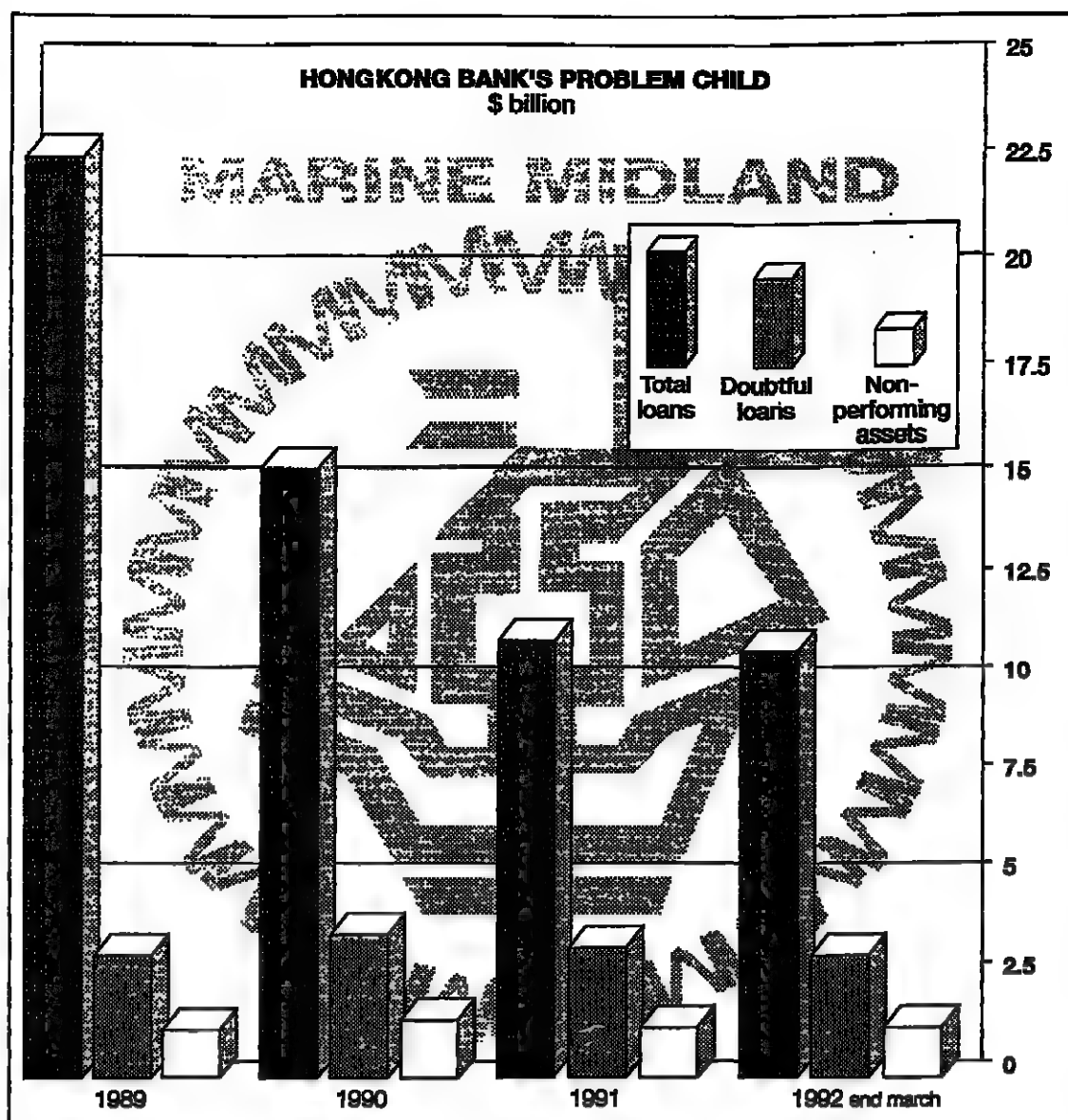
With hindsight, analysts question what brought Hongkong Bank to the shores of Lake Erie at all. While the bank was ready to expand its operations overseas, the most logical direction would have been around the Pacific rim. California, with its sunrise industries and close links to the Asia-Pacific region, would have been a natural choice.

Instead, the group chose a bank in the heart of America's rust belt. Buffalo, in New York State, Marine's headquarters, was a powerful industrial city in the late nineteenth century. At one point, it boasted both the highest skyscraper and biggest office block in the world. In recent years, however, it has suffered a painful economic decline, lightened only by the success of the Buffalo Bills football team.

Marine also had a number of significant internal problems when Hongkong Bank arrived. Throughout the seventies and eighties, it suffered an identity crisis. The bank turned its back on its profitable core retail business, due to the unappealing growth prospects, and used its strong capital to develop into a full money centre bank.

The first consequence was a mas-

Hongkong's global schemes are haunted by Buffalo nightmare



sive non-performing Third World debt book. This peaked at \$1.74 billion in 1987, when provisions plunged the bank to a \$409 million loss. Marine's management has since sold the debt on secondary markets and today the portfolio is worth only \$17.1 million. The total cost of the sell-off in the past three years was \$620 million.

Third World lending was merely an overture compared with the firestorm that followed within the bank's domestic lending book. In the past two years, Marine has made losses of almost \$500 million because of massive bad debt provisions on its property and highly leveraged transaction lending book.

Marine is only one of many banks in eastern America that has been brought to its knees by bad debts in the past three years. The scale of the bad lending, however, makes even British banks seem models of prudence by comparison. Today, Marine holds criticised or doubtful loans — where some provision has been raised — of \$3.2 billion, more than one sixth of the total asset book. Non-performing loans are valued at \$1.1 billion, while the bank effectively owns property worth another \$340 million through repossessions.

The core of the bank's problems lies in its property book. The value of

commercial property in many parts of New York State has fallen 40 per cent and made it impossible for most investors and developers to service their debts.

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the American bank regulator, has strict rules for determining when to classify a loan as non-performing and these have ensured that 87 per cent of the bank's property lending portfolio is now criticised, or worse. The portfolio is now worth almost \$2 billion, and will take years, or perhaps decades, to work out.

Brian Robertson, the bank's head of asset quality, believes that property prices in some areas will not recover in our lifetimes. The situation at the bank reached a nadir at the end of 1990 when a report from the OCC sent a profound shock through the entire group. Until then, Hongkong Bank had only known about rising profits and the stable expanding economies in the Far East. Suddenly a regulator was warning that Marine's loan book was dangerously under-provided and that its capital was inadequate.

The losses would have tempted a faint-hearted owner to close up shop and retreat home. Instead, Hong-

kong Bank shook the bank upside down and injected \$500 million.

The nagging question is how Hongkong Bank could have allowed the situation to deteriorate so far. Admittedly, the group could never have known how badly the American property market would be hit, or how deeply the recession would bite, but Hongkong Bank did make one costly error when it acquired Marine. It agreed not to become directly involved in the bank's management. Marine's existing executive team continued to dig the bank deeper into a hole until 1987, when the group finally gained the right to intervene.

Since then, it has made up for its earlier laxity with a vengeance. Today, the longest-serving member on the ten-man senior management committee joined in 1988. Five of the executives are British from head office. The new team, led by John Bond, the chief executive, and Keith Whitson, the chief banking officer, took radical steps to stabilise the bank. Both are tipped to play important roles within the Hongkong Bank group if the bid for Midland succeeds.

In the past two years, the new team has slashed its assets from \$27 billion to less than \$18 billion. They have stripped away many of Marine's lower yielding assets, including a car

loan portfolio, which expanded during its ill-fated attempt to become a money centre bank. Concord, a leasing business, and large corporate lending have been transferred to the parent bank. Marine has also sliced into its cost base. Staff numbers have been cut by more than 3,000 to 10,500 and underlying costs reduced by \$225 million a year.

In April, Marine's new management was rewarded with a return to profit. In the first quarter, the bank reported earnings of \$2.6 million, compared with a net loss of \$72.3 million in the same period in 1991. While the trend and the return to profit are encouraging, Marine is still coping with a mammoth bad debt portfolio. A team of 300 executives is monitoring the loans and selling the property, but the process will continue into the middle of the decade. By then the bank could start to enjoy significant writebacks from the provisions and accrued tax losses of more than \$800 million.

Fortunately, the bank's core business remains strong. Marine has 317 branches and \$3 billion in deposits, making it the fourth largest bank in the state. It also has a \$14 billion securitised mortgage portfolio and 1.2 million credit cards. Robert Butcher, the chief financial officer, says the decline in assets has now largely ended, as further disposals and shrinkage will be countered by expansion in the core business.

The \$500 million cash injection from HSBC, Hongkong Bank's parent company, has also made Marine one of the best capitalised banks in America, with a tier one ratio of more than 8 per cent, double the international minimum.

John Gray, HSBC's deputy chairman, is pleased with the results of the bank's commitment to Marine. He says: "Sure we have made mistakes but when something goes wrong we do something about it. We learn by our mistakes and if you have a commitment you can turn a business around."

Ominously, Marine Midland's slump mirrors many of the disasters suffered by Midland Bank in the past two decades. Like the American bank, Midland tried to expand away from its traditional industrial customer base by lending to the Third World and suffered similarly disastrous consequences. More recently, both banks have been hit by a rising flood of domestic bad debts caused by the boom and bust of the local economy. Midland could lay claim to an even greater share of disaster than its American namesake, because it, like Hongkong Bank, was tempted to expand into America, and bought the wrong bank in the wrong area.

Hongkong Bank's failure to understand Marine's problems before it invested almost \$1 billion, and its subsequent failure to check the excesses of the local management, do not speak highly for its skills as a global bank. Perhaps its bruising experience with Marine has prepared it for the international arena and the pitfalls of international acquisitions. It will need all of this costly experience if it wins its fight for Midland.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Hoare team gets the chop

ABN Amro, the Dutch bank, made its first day as the new owner of Hoare Govett, the broker, with savage redundancies including the wholesale departure of Hoare's small companies sales team, widely held as one of the best in the business. Among the 35 casualties were Richard Payne, corporate finance director, and Robert Whitaker, head of UK equity sales who is being succeeded by Giles Fitzpatrick. On the small companies sales side, the casualties include Shamin Allison, 48, head of the sales team, who had been with Hoare for 27 years, Adam Pollock, 31, a salesman and ex-Lazard, and Fiona Watkinson, 27, who is on holiday. Whitaker, Allison and Pollock, who left Hoare on Friday, were yesterday hoping to move as a united team to new pastures. According to Peter Meinerzhagen, Hoare Govett's chairman, the broker is "as committed as ever" to small companies despite slashing its sales team — it will continue to have dedicated salesmen and to produce the respected Hoare Govett FT-SE style index on small companies. Allison, however, was predicting a huge loss of confidence in his old firm. "The core of the small companies business was principally in our team and our contacts," he said. "I think they'll find that a large amount of the goodwill they had was tied up in sales."

Anglo ambassador
WHEN Anglo American Corporation embarks next month on its first European roadshow to convince investors



"Don't know about you but I'm frozen"

that South Africa has changed, possibly nothing will do more for its case than the appointment of Dr Mamphele Ramphele, 44, as a non-executive director. Aleta Ramphele, as she is known, is the second black person and the first woman to join the Anglo American board. She is already prominent in South Africa, where she is deputy vice-chancellor of Cape Town University. She has also played a key role in helping Anglo American devise programmes on poverty alleviation while her book on the subject, *Uprooting Poverty: The South African Challenge*, co-written with Francis Wilson, is said to be essential reading for Anglo American executives keen to be *au fait* with the latest liberal thinking.

Mistaken identity

A FRENZY of publicity is being whipped up for the latest Lloyd's of London hatchet job, *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, by biographer Jonathan Martie. A pre-launch press release from the publisher, Sinclair Stevenson, promises "the story of a hidden holocaust" that

has allegedly "annihilated 20 per cent of the English middle classes". Strong stuff indeed. However, the impact of the purple prose has been slightly undermined by one small but crucial omission unfortunately repeated about 20 times — the apostrophe that turns Lloyd's, the profitable high street bank, into Lloyd's, the loss-making insurance institution. One only hopes the proof reader of the book knows the difference.

Picture of woe

THE Institute of Directors faces a £164,000 bill for the cleaning of the ten or so paintings hanging in its imposing premises in Pall Mall, London — once the home of the United Services Club — and is claiming that it does not have the wherewithal to pay it. According to its lease from the Crown, the institute is responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and refurbishment of the building, but it is now examining the contract's finer print to determine whether it is legally liable for this additional bill. The works include two huge oil paintings on the second floor. *The Battle of Waterloo*, painted by George Jones in 1817 — approximately 15 ft by 7 ft — is worth £100,000. The other, *The Battle of Trafalgar*, by Clarkson Stanfield, is worth £250,000. Their frames are also said to need regilding. An IOD spokesman says: "We can't afford to go it alone," adding that since the paintings are owned by the Crown, and deemed to be national treasures, the institute is now in friendly talks with the Crown's agents and hopeful of negotiating a joint approach to the problem.

DEBRA ISAAC

Catch 22 in the housing market

From Mr Nick Aspinall
Sir, Much has been written about the key indicators to restoration of consumer confidence (GNP, unemployment, interest rates), but for the individual who was encouraged to move house in the first three boom quarters of 1988 two overriding issues continue to depress confidence.

The threat of redundancy is enough to cause most breadwinners to want to reduce their overheads in order to give better protection against that eventuality. This means clearing old debts while building savings and attempting these twin tasks leaves almost no disposable income. So the threat of redundancy has the same effect on confidence as redundancy itself.

The second issue concerns high numbers of house-movers who were encouraged to borrow "cheap money" to the hilt in 1988 and as property prices have fallen now find that they owe more than their property is worth. Until house prices move upwards and once again exceed the size of the mortgage, thereby restoring the homeowners' nest-egg, these homeowners are effectively out of the housing market and their confidence is destroyed. The last issue smacks of Catch 22. Recovery won't come until the housing market recovers. The housing market can't recover until homeowners restore their net equity. There can be no net equity until house prices rise. House prices won't rise until house sales recover. Won't all this take time? Perhaps until 1994?

Yours faithfully,
NICK ASPINALL
Managing Director,
Oxford Retail Consultants,
Wicks House,
West Hamney, Oxfordshire

The simplicity of extended personal equity plans for the savings market

From Mr Philip Chappell
Sir, Mathematics and common-sense do not always fit easily together, as shown by the Dilnot/Johnson paper on Tax Reform (Economic View, May 26). The overwhelming arguments for abolishing mortgage relief and treating pension contributions as a benefit-in-kind are not driven by proposals for a cut in basic rate tax, but by support for a fairer, simpler, tax system which impacts equally on all tax payers. The Institute for Fiscal Studies has been the leader in extended personal equity plans (expeps) and should surely support as broad a base as possible for the savings market. Pensions and mortgage relief both involve complexity and cross-subsidy,

merely creating jobs for vested interests rather than the consumer.

Expeps are simple: all savings are made out of after-tax income, but thereafter are treated free of all tax. Expeps are flexible: the individuals' transactions are adapted to their personal needs, and droves of the Inland Revenue and accountants become unnecessary. Expeps restore personal ownership, without the barriers and limits which create cost burdens even for the present pep regime. Expeps restore power to choose and right to own in the savings market.

The article suggests that transferring pensions, even onto an expeps regime, might not generate much revenue.

Mortgage tax relief

From The Secretary-General of The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Sir, If the extra tax earned from phasing out mortgage interest relief were used to cut the basic rate of income tax, the Institute for Fiscal Studies is right (report, May 26) that the main gainers would be the better-off. But those who have argued for some time — seven years in the case of this institution — for its phasing out have not proposed recycling the saving into tax cuts.

We have looked at the total resources from the public purse which go into housing and have viewed the tax foregone on mortgage interest (some £6.1 billion in 1991-2) as a substantial part of this total spend. We have then asked how these resources could be applied more equitably and effectively towards the national goal of decent homes for all. Our answer and that of a growing number of others is that the way forward lies in the

introduction of a new type of housing allowance. Such an allowance would go to the individual, not the home. It would be available to all householders on the basis of need, whether they be homeowners, mortgage payers, public sector tenants or private tenants.

Such a move would go a long way towards removing the distortions which bedevil British housing. The price of accommodation — owned, mortgaged or rented — could then follow the market. Individuals would be able to choose the form of tenure that best met their needs, not be pushed into one option by the tax benefits. Such changes could increase the supply of homes, helping both to combat homelessness and encourage labour mobility.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL PATTISON,
General Secretary,
The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors,
12 Great George Street,
Parliament Square, SW1

THE TIMES RENTALS

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"I'm afraid the cleaner thought your letter was rubbish and threw it away"

YOU SEND off a business letter in the sure and certain hope of cleaning up. And what happens? Someone else does. It doesn't take much to turn a letter into litter.

All it takes is an obscure word, a pompous turn of phrase, a jarring piece of jargon.

As Goethe said:

"NO ONE WOULD TALK MUCH IN SOCIETY IF ONLY HE KNEW HOW OFTEN HE MISUNDERSTANDS OTHERS."

Experts in any field will naturally use their own specialized language.

A computer boffin will talk in terms of 'bytes'.

But someone somewhere might assume, not unreasonably, that an invitation to lunch is on the cards.

Environmental scientists will bang on about ecosystems. And it's not inconceivable to imagine someone thinking they're the latest thing in hi-fi.

Basically, it's all too easy for an expert to slip into the jargon of his profession, leaving the rest of us floundering. After all, it's the sort of language he uses every day.

But who does he think he's talking to? It's the first question we should ask ourselves when we sit down to compose a letter.

Even less excusable is the use of language none of us uses every day:

"I don't see any windows for the next few days." [Fine if you're a coal miner.]

"Production is ramping up." "Bottom line it for me."

Stilted businesspeak like this is clearly intended to impress, to make the writer appear switched on.

> In the event, though, the reader will quickly switch off.

Letterspeak can often come across as equally pretentious.

You know. The sort of stuff that was drummed into us at school, overly formal, unnatural and actually clouding the point we're trying to make.

> Come on. Admit it. When was the last time you heard someone say: "It would be greatly appreciated if you could pass me the salt and pepper."

"I gratefully acknowledge receipt of your kiss."

"Enclosed, please find your groceries."

A style like this only succeeds in sounding either bored or boring or both.

We should strive to express, not impress.

The content of what we have to say should be impressive enough.

Of course, slipshod spelling and punctuation can trip up any reader. A misplaced comma can be a pain in the colon.

And it's never done anyone any harm to have a passing acquaintance with syntax.

But we shouldn't allow ourselves to be slaves to the niceties of grammar.

Admittedly, deep in darkest Surrey there still exists a sect of septuagenarian pedants for whom the splitting of an infinitive is as catastrophic an act for the human

race as the splitting of the atom ever was.

For the busy businessman, however, it's simply splitting hairs. He's more interested in figures than figures of speech.



So if you really want to impress someone, your letter-writing style should be as clear as can be.

The quality of the paper you use can also make an impression. The medium can be as important as the message.

Conqueror paper gives a distinct feeling of quality, being high in cotton as well as satisfyingly opaque. [Your paper should be as opaque as your message is clear.]

The weight [6.24 grams per sheet, if you'd like to know] could even add a little weight to your argument.

The watermark is bold and centred. Now you see it when you hold it up to the light, now you don't when you put it flat on the desk. Just as it should be in fact.

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For all your corporate requirements, Conqueror is available either laid, wove or embossed in a myriad of colours, in paper, text, board and envelopes.

And in an enormous number of countries too.

So while your posting to Tierra del Fuego may be nothing to write home about, at least you'll have something to write home on.

What's more, if your company's only been going for five minutes, using a paper that's been established for over a hundred years can add a measure of credibility, a note of reassurance, an element of stature, even.

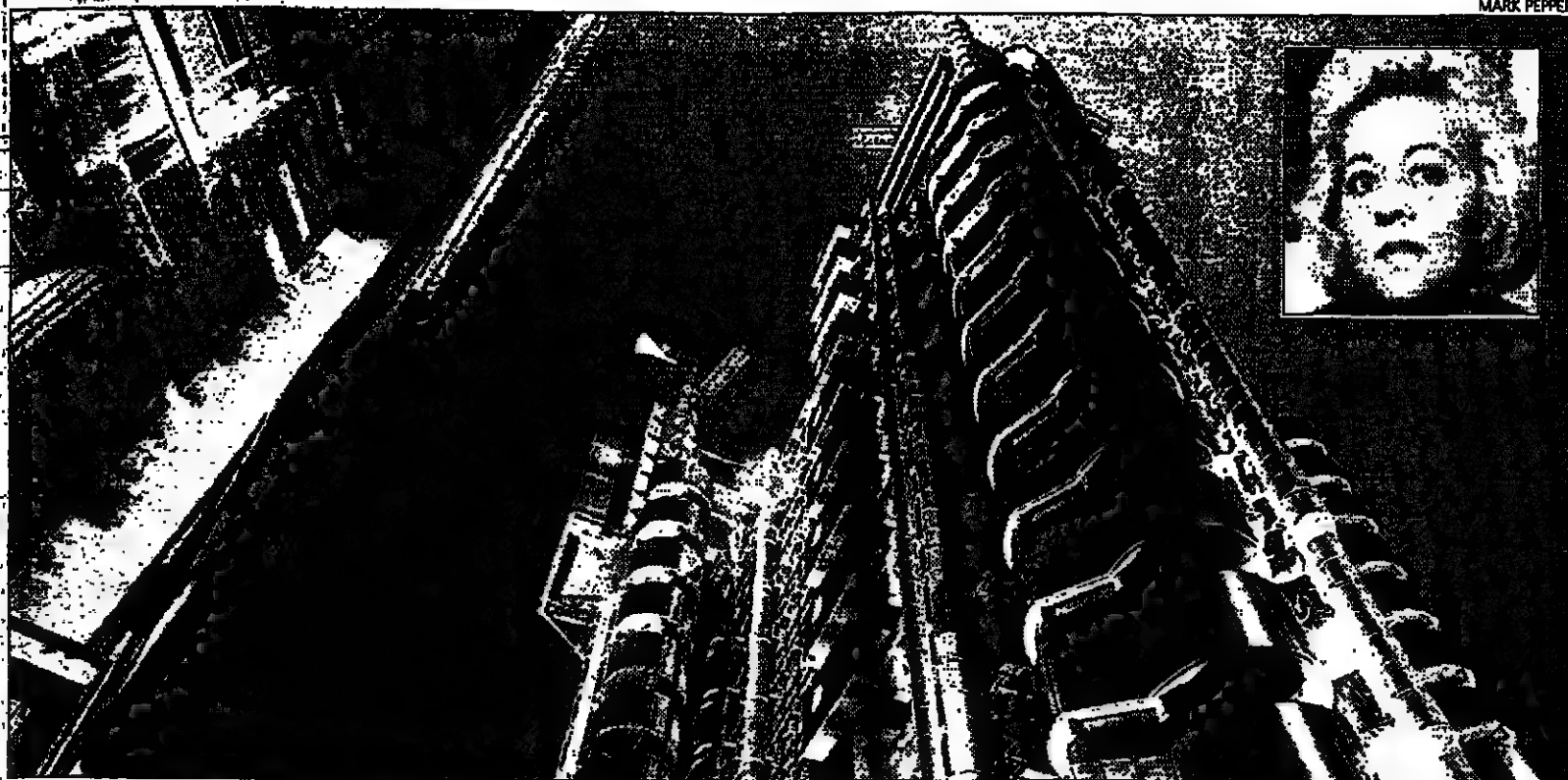
After all, whatever your style, you've got to have style.

And if you still don't think that's important, we've only got one thing we want to say to you. Rubbish.

conqueror

For your free copy of "History in the Making" Conqueror's look at letter-writing through the ages, call 0208 732800.

LAW TIMES



Rising insurance claims: Lloyd's of London insurance building, and (inset) Erica Dickinson, was awarded £425,000 in damages from solicitors

Lawyer against lawyer

Insurance premiums for solicitors are rising as more clients make negligence claims. Hugh Thompson reports on a firm that specialises in such cases

Since 1980, the number of solicitors being sued for negligence has risen from 2,900 to 15,000. To accommodate the increased costs of negligence, solicitors' professional indemnity insurance premiums rose by 34 per cent last year. A high street solicitor pays £4,000 a year in professional indemnity insurance premiums, four times more than an equivalent doctor and twice as much as a similarly earning accountant.

The main reasons are increased public awareness and confidence; no longer will people accept a bad job. Fewer are intimidated by solicitors, more are prepared to exercise their rights.

But while most solicitors see the pendulum swinging too far the wrong way, and there is talk of defensive law having to be practised to avoid costly mistakes, one firm has seized the opportunity. This time last year, Irwin Mitchell, the Sheffield and Birmingham based solicitors' firm, set up a special unit to deal with negligence claims against solicitors. In the past year, the number of solicitors' cases the firm handles has more than doubled to the current 250.

For Michael Napier, the senior partner, specialising in

suing solicitors is a natural extension of the expertise the firm has built up in personal injury, medical negligence and insurance law. The firm is also heavily involved in disaster cases.

"We have always been strong on litigation, we have always been prepared to take cases that others found too difficult," Mr Napier says. "This is an area of law the public has traditionally thought that most solicitors will not handle."

Several cases that have put the firm on the map involved negligence by solicitors. Erica Dickinson, for instance, was awarded a £12,600 lump sum and £2,400 a year divorce settlement after nearly 20 years of marriage with her millionaire husband. In 1989, ten years after that settlement, she was awarded, with the help of Irwin Mitchell, £425,000 against the solicitors who advised her.

James Taylor, the Irwin Mitchell partner in charge of the professional negligence department says that about half the cases are legally aided.

Most come from conveyancing mistakes because of technical and administrative error. "There is a human element in the job, so there will always be errors," he says. "We have dealt with one case in which the solicitor lost the papers and pretended there was no case. In another, the barrister had the papers for months without opening them."

"We are actually dealing with one case in which we are suing a solicitor for negligently suing another solicitor."

At present the supply of the increasing work load comes from three sources: other solicitors who realise the case is too technical or that they have been negligent and must pass the client elsewhere; second, the firm's high profile leads the public to it; and third, with such a large practice, there are negligence cases arising from the work of other lawyers in cases involving Irwin Mitchell. Twenty of the current solicitors' negligence cases come from the firms'

personal injury cases. "There are too many high-street solicitors who, despite increasing specialisation, try to be a jack of all cases which can often lead to problems," Mr Napier says. "The client starts to think that things are not progressing as they should: they feel something is wrong. A communication gap is created and they come to us. Losing confidence in a solicitor is a shattering experience."

However, the public's increased expectations about what the law can and cannot provide are sometimes overstretched. Irwin Mitchell has been asked to sue judges because an aggrieved party felt the judge was in collusion with the prosecuting barrister—the "evidence" being that they both wore the same coloured tie.

"We often have long discussions with people about what they can realistically expect. Classically, if a solicitor's negligence has meant that they have received less in damages than they thought, proving this negligence will not neces-

sarily mean that they will get what they consider to be the full amount."

Irwin Mitchell prides itself on its "forensic approach", its ability "to see angles where others do not". Doesn't this mean they find negligence where others would not? Mr Napier comments: "If we are forcing those in general practice to be more careful about what cases they handle, we are improving the profession."

But as one family solicitor in Bromley, south London, said: "The result of this swing to increased claims of negligence is more expensive law, which means the poorest will suffer."

In negligence cases, it is the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund that has to pay out in either costs or damages or both. Brian Stewart, claims manager for the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund, says: "The fund faces many claims that have been handled in a slow and inept fashion. This only adds to the costs, which are borne by the whole profession. Any move that speeds up the process and weeds out the spurious claims is to be welcomed."

Mr Napier adds: "The fact that we get so much of this work from other solicitors shows what the profession thinks of us."

Where the judge was considered a god

James Morris, in *Pax Britannica*, a study of the British Empire, referred to a hill tribe in India that was involved in a dispute with the government about forest rights. When discovered sacrificing a kid to endear themselves to a distant deity, the elders of the community explained: "We know nothing of him, but that he is a good god, and that his name is the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council."

The success of Empire in encouraging the resolution of disputes by peaceful and rational means, notwithstanding the absurdity of the cultural clashes to which this could give rise, is the background to Ronnie Knox-Mawer's new book, *A Case of Bananas* (Michael O'Mara Books, £14.99).

From 1952 until 1970, Mr Knox-Mawer served with Her Majesty's Overseas Judiciary. In 1986, *Tales from a Palm Court* described his experiences as a judge in British Arabia. Now he recounts affectionate tales, some taller than others, of his life on circuit in the South Pacific, armed only with *Halsbury's Laws of England* and his wig box.

His court was "a stuffy little arena with a tin roof and a single creaking fan". His bench was "a peeling leather chair containing a broken spring repaired with guava twine". There was "the unforgettable occasion on the Nambuan Assize Circuit when my sitting was made infeasible by a plague of Samoan pine wasps".

The cause list habitually concerned "pig theft, after-school toddy drinking and the usual surmises against rickshaw drivers who constantly ignored the 5mph speed limit on the seafloor". Occasionally there was a serious case, such as "a felonious conspiracy to cast a spell of impotence on the newly married chief", or there was the need for a stiff deterrent sentence, as during "the 1959 Coconut Riots" when "teenage rebels had pelted the village elders with showers of half-ripe missiles after a night of kava drinking".

Mr Knox-Mawer assures his readers that he would consult *Archbold's Criminal Pleading, Evidence and Procedure* before he "struggled to drive home a direction to the jury on the corroboration of an accomplice's evidence". The last trained advocate who wrote so affectionately about the South Sea Islands was Robert Louis Stevenson.

James Morris saw the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, with its powers over a quarter of the population of the world, as "the one imperial institution that smacked authentically of the Caesars".

Her Majesty's Judges abroad had a similarly grand function, both important and anomalous, of interpreting the tribal customs and laws of proud and independent civilisa-

tions by reference to the values embodied in the *Weekly Law Reports*.

The real achievements of the English legal system as a civilising force, notwithstanding the pomposity to which it is prone, were not diminished, though they were made more entertaining, by the application through Africa and Asia of some of the more farcical manifestations of English legal procedure.

The wearing of wigs and gowns, inconvenient and absurd in the Royal Courts of Justice, was a positive health hazard nearer the Equator. In temperatures of 115F, wearing "the scarlet and ermine" was made tolerable only by "stripping off completely underneath, save for a pair of Airtex briefs and a string vest". The judge's Ed & Ravenscroft wig box served as a bucket on the capsize of the launch carrying him between islands to dispense justice.

A Victorian predecessor had, on his retirement, left his wig with the elders of the community, as "they thought it was the secret of his *mana*, his power". In modern times, other symbols are more attractive. Mr Knox-Mawer gives evidence — there is no corroboration — that the queen of one island, attending court proceedings, took a fancy to the judge's striped trousers. As a colonial judge has to observe local custom, her majesty received the trousers as a gift.

In Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, Scobie, the police officer in west Africa, has "six witnesses to examine, and he didn't believe a word that any of them said... Now lost in the tangle of lies he felt an extraordinary affection for these people who paralysed an alien form of justice by so simple a method".

The mixed pleasures of self-government have largely removed the predominantly benevolent, sometimes bewildered, and occasionally intolerant colonialism of the travelling judge. However, legal advertisements in these law pages of *The Times* are still aimed at recruiting judges, law officers and advocates for independent territories that once formed part of the Empire. In *Tales from a Palm Court*, Mr Knox-Mawer noted that whenever he arrived at the court house at Mahaba, on the shores of the Indian Ocean, "my request for silence was invariably drowned by the traditional song of welcome".

English judges who are more accustomed to criticism than compliments, and lawyers tempted to escape a professional life governed by no excitement other than uncertainty as to when the legal aid authorities will condescend to pay for work done, should read and enjoy Mr Knox-Mawer's evocation of the brighter side of legal life in the shade.

The author is a practising barrister and a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford



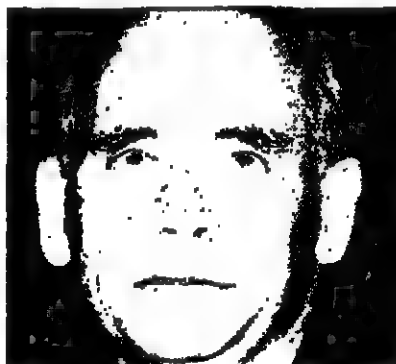
DAVID PANNICK

AS FRAUD WORSENS, FIRMS REEL UNDER A LARGE LEVY

SOLICITORS' firms are still reeling from the shock news that they face a special levy of £1,700 a partner to pay for the increase in sums claimed for dishonesty by colleagues from the profession's compensation fund this year.

The rise in claims against the fund, partly because of the growth in mortgage fraud, means that payments for 1992 could reach £20 million, compared with £11.7 million in 1991. Mortgage fraud involving solicitors is estimated by the Metropolitan Police's company fraud department to be running at more than £1 billion.

The compensation fund, though, is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to claims against the profession. The fund deals only with claims of dishonesty against sole practitioners. All other claims are met by the professional indemnity fund, which is setting aside enough to meet claims of



Philip Ely: trailed new proposal

£200 million. The figures, and the predicted continuing rise, are prompting unprecedented debate about how to tackle compensation.

As well as tighter controls on how solicitors keep accounts and handle clients' money, the profession is for the

first time considering putting a cap, or "ceiling", on the amount it will pay for any one claim, particularly where the claimant is a financial institution.

The profession is now the only one that pays out on claims with no limit and there is growing support for a cap, although many would not favour a limit on claims by private clients.

At the same time, there are separate proposals — first trailed last autumn by Philip Ely, president of the Law Society — to increase gradually the element of a professional indemnity claim that firms must meet themselves, possibly eventually to £20,000.

In one of the biggest consultation exercises seen by the profession, every solicitor in England and Wales will receive a copy of the proposals on how to tackle the rise in claims on the compensation fund.

FRANCES GIBB

Pressed for time

WILL THE new Lord Chief Justice break new ground and appoint his own press officer? Lord Taylor, who has ushered in a new era of media-friendliness among judges, is beginning to find that contact with the media is a double-edged sword.

THE office of his unprecedented press conference on the day his appointment was announced, some journalists seemed to think they could ring him up, on a daily basis, for "instant comment" on cases. That, he said in an interview with *The Times* today, was not what he meant at all. "Apart from anything else," he added, "I have better things to do."

There was also the fuss surrounding the "first" interviews with three national dailies, carefully timed by Sheila Thompson, the Lord Chancellor's press officer. All the dailies were all pipped to the post when the *Sunday Telegraph* came out with an interview privately arranged with Lord Taylor himself.

There is concern, too, that the head of the judiciary should be sharing press officers with the Lord Chancellor. Lord Mackay of Clashfern, Lord Taylor admits there is the potential for a conflict of interest, but so far is not committing himself on his

to review the needs of his own office, including press relations, in three months' time. Either way, he is bound to ask for more back-up: Lord Lane struggled for years with a clerk, secretary and a typist.

Cooled passions

THE office of the Lord of the land of lovers may be in for a shock. While surveys have shown that sexual harassment in some French offices is something women are expected to view as a compliment, France's minister for women's rights is about to call a halt.

The minister has obtained approval for a bill to make sexual harassment a criminal offence. Under the proposal, convicted harassers will face either a fine or a spell in jail to cool their ardour.

Writ large

THERE are many prominent figures or even giants in the arts who have started life as lawyers and thought better of it (Washington Irving and Henri Matisse are two).

There are also those who manage to do both, Sir Walter Scott being perhaps one of the most shining examples.

In *Lawful Occasions*, by Andrew Louthan, a collection of essays and literary extracts on Scotland and the law, Robert Louis Stevenson (himself an advocate, although he

rarely practised) and John Buchan both write about Scott's illustrious career as Sheriff and Clerk of Sessions and his place within the bar in Edinburgh where he wrote the *Waverley* novels in the midst of the buzz of legal life. The book also has extracts from James Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Highlands*, John Buchan's *John Macnab* and Lord Birken's *Sir Great Advantages*. Not cheap at £19.95, but a good read.

Fraud stuff?

FRAUDSTERS had better watch out unless they are also expert computer hackers. The trade and industry department's investigations division has gone high-tech. While the Serious Fraud Office has decided to turn away cases to focus its resources on major

frauds, the department has brought in a new computer system, *Learus*, in computer language a "bespoke Ingres case management system". It has been developed by AMP Systems. *Learus* is designed to remove the need for paper files and case clerks.

The 90 or so staff in the division now have a specially developed system to enable them to track cases and give them access to information on cases they are involved in.

Mervyn Hall, of the Computer Management Group which managed the installation of the system, says: "An important aspect of all this was the involvement of users in the detailed specification of the system from the beginning."

The department, however, must be hoping the system is better equipped than its unfortunate namesake, who had a tendency to crash when the going got too hot.

Farewell

FRESHFIELDS and the City are mourning the death of the firm's partner, Bill Richards, a finance specialist. A Yorkshireman, Mr Richards was well liked in the City and included among his accomplishments the opening of Freshfields' Tokyo office. He was 42, and leaves a wife and three children.

A memorial service will be held at St Bride's, Fleet Street, on June 15. The family has requested no flowers and that donations be made to the British Heart Foundation.

SCRIVENOR

HONG KONG COMMERCIAL LAWYER

Our client, one of the top London firms, is urgently seeking two general Commercial Lawyers of between two and four years post qualification experience to work in its flourishing Hong Kong office. One of these solicitors should be a Cantonese speaker and both should have excellent academic qualifications (minimum 2:1 degree), and City training with blue chip experience in one of the top firms.

This is an excellent opportunity, enabling an outstanding candidate to spend several exciting years in the Far East - with the option of returning to England at a later date on a full and progressive career path.

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LONDON

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Progressive and expanding Central London practice seeks senior lawyer with following and minimum of 5 years' pge in intellectual property to join busy department. Ref: T6483

SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL

Dynamic lawyer with good experience in the planning and environment field is required to coordinate and develop already thriving department within City practice. Must have relevant marketing experience or excellent contacts. Ref: T6464

BANKING

Major City practice seeks 1-4 year qualified banking lawyers for variety of international and domestic transactions. Thriving department. Burgeoning caseload. Exceptional opportunity. Ref: T6351

To £150,000

COMPANY/COMMERCIAL

Niche City firm with high quality corporate work, seeks 2-4 year corporate lawyer, able to front deals with minimum supervision. Excellent salary and benefits. Ref: T6365

INSOLVENCY

Well known medium-sized City firm seeks 2-3 year qualified litigator for contentious caseload of mainly insolvency related work. Those from top City backgrounds but without relevant experience will be considered. Ref: T5367

SHIPPING FINANCE

Newly qualified lawyer sought by practice with strong asset finance reputation to undertake heavy shipping finance caseload. Excellent prospects for candidate with strong academic background and relevant experience during articles. Ref: T6491

To £55,000

To £43,000

To £27,500

For further information, in complete confidence, please contact Stephen Rodney or Deborah Dalgleish (both solicitors) on 071-405 6062 (071-354 3079 evenings/weekends) or write to them at Quarry Douglall Recruitment, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD. Confidential fax: 071-831 6394.



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Our Client, a major player in the international securities arena, highly prominent in financial markets worldwide, seeks a dynamic and highly motivated senior lawyer to head its newly formed Transaction Structuring Group.

The role involves leading and administering the Transaction Structuring Group responsible for assisting in the development and execution of capital markets and investment banking transactions.

The successful candidate will have at least eight years' corporate and/or capital markets experience gained in a top City firm or will hold a prominent position in another quality finance house. Well developed management and organisational skills are essential qualities for success in this role.

This is an exceptional opportunity and the successful candidate will be offered a salary and benefits package which reflects the importance of the role.

For further information, in complete confidence, please contact Stephen Rodney on 071-405 6062 (071-354 3079 evenings/weekends) or write to him at Quarry Dougall Commerce & Industry Recruitment, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD. Confidential fax: 071-831 6394. Initial discussions can be held on a no names basis.



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Our Client, a highly innovative and progressive commercial London law firm, is enjoying dramatic growth in its recently established Leeds practice such that it now seeks an ambitious commercial partner to establish and develop a company/commercial practice in Leeds.

The firm's Leeds practice has this year virtually doubled its fee-income. To build on this success, it seeks a dynamic and experienced commercial lawyer who, in addition to technical expertise, has proven practice development skills and has a clear wish to build on an existing client base.

The successful candidate will be offered a highly competitive partnership package and the opportunity to take the leading role in the development of the firm's company/commercial practice in Leeds.

For further information, in complete confidence, please contact Alistair Dougall on 071-405 6062 (071-831 0030 evenings/weekends) or write to him at Quarry Dougall Recruitment, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD. Confidential fax: 071-831 6394. Initial discussions can be held on a no names basis.



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Corporate Legal Adviser

North London c £65,000 + Benefits

Our client is the wholly owned UK subsidiary of one of the world's largest insurance companies and is fully supported by its US parent. Key areas of involvement include life assurance, pensions and single premium investment.

Integral to the company's plans is its desire to recruit a Senior Legal Adviser to provide legal support for its business goals.

It is envisaged that the successful candidate may be a salaried partner in a City firm or a senior lawyer in another company, with a minimum of five years relevant post qualification experience.

Applicants should display broad corporate and commercial legal knowledge and have a thorough understanding of insurance and regulatory issues. It is critical that candidates possess excellent communication skills, ambition and the desire to achieve both personal and company goals. Prospects for career development are excellent.

The remuneration package is outstanding and dependent on experience and ability.

Interested applicants should telephone Mary Canning on 071 831 2000 or forward their curriculum vitae to her at Michael Page Legal, Page House, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LH. Fax: 071 831 6662. Details will be held in strict confidence.

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Our client, with a sustained record of improved growth, has gone from strength to strength in the pharmaceutical sector and is now recognised as a major force in the industry. With its outstanding growth record during the past decade, it is now truly international in size and reputation and has become a world leader in its sphere.

An exciting opportunity has now arisen for a commercially minded lawyer to join its legal team based at its headquarters in the East Midlands.

Working closely with senior managers, you will be responsible for drafting and advising on a wide range of high value commercial agreements, monitoring legal developments (particularly in the field of competition law) and the provision of general legal advice to the company and its subsidiaries worldwide.

Candidates should have a minimum of three years post qualification experience gained either within the commercial department of a large law firm or in industry. Strong drafting and interpersonal skills are essential and candidates must possess the ability to deliver commercially realistic advice and to work effectively as part of a team.

In addition to an attractive salary, there is an excellent range of benefits which you would associate with a large and successful organisation.

For further details in confidence, please call Struan Hall on 071-430 1711 (071-221 8806 evenings) or forward your c.v. to him at Graham Gill & Young, 44-46 Kingsway, London WC2B 6EN. (Fax 071-831 4186)

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Burmah Petroleum Fuels Limited is the largest independent retailer of motor fuels in the UK, with responsibility for managing a substantial property portfolio. It is part of the International Burmah Castrol group of companies.

The Company's newly appointed Legal Adviser is now seeking a Solicitor to join him in establishing a legal function in order to achieve the ambitious objectives set for the department and the Company as a whole.

The range of work is diverse and interesting, ranging from commercial conveyancing, sale of goods law, environmental legislation and litigation to employment law and acquisitions.

In addition to personal qualities of flexibility, organisation and maturity, you will need a minimum of 3 years' substantial post qualification experience. In particular, you must be fully conversant with commercial conveyancing, general contract law and litigation matters, including Landlord and Tenant and debt recovery. Experience of downstream oil industry legal work would be an advantage but is not essential - we are more interested in your attitude and commitment to our goals.

The position carries with it an attractive package including relocation assistance where appropriate. If you think you could offer us the combination of expertise and commitment we seek, then please send your CV to Helen Kelly, Personnel Department, Burmah Petroleum Fuels Ltd., Burmah Castrol House, Pipers Way, Swindon SN3 1RE or telephone her for an application form on (0793) 511521 ext 2308.

Please ensure that your application is received by 17th June 1992.

TRADE MARKS PROFESSIONAL

We are looking for a senior trade marks practitioner to join our Trade Marks Unit, which operates from London and Hong Kong. The successful candidate will be based in our London office and will preferably be a Fellow or Ordinary Member of the Institute of Trade Mark Agents or a solicitor or barrister. A proven record in UK and overseas trade marks either in industry or private practice is essential.

This is an excellent opportunity if you are seeking to further your career in trade marks in the challenging environment of an international law firm. The Trade Marks Unit is an integral part of the firm's Intellectual Property Department and you will be expected to provide essential backup services to our lawyers

in both contentious and non-contentious matters, as well as handling a portfolio of applications for major UK and foreign clients and providing innovative and imaginative solutions to their trade marks problems.

To find out more about the position, please call Janet Lewis on 071-606 7080, or write to her at Barrington House, 59-67 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7JA.

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Power push from the ranks

Vanni Treves and
James Ukropina on
shareholders'
demands for
a louder voice

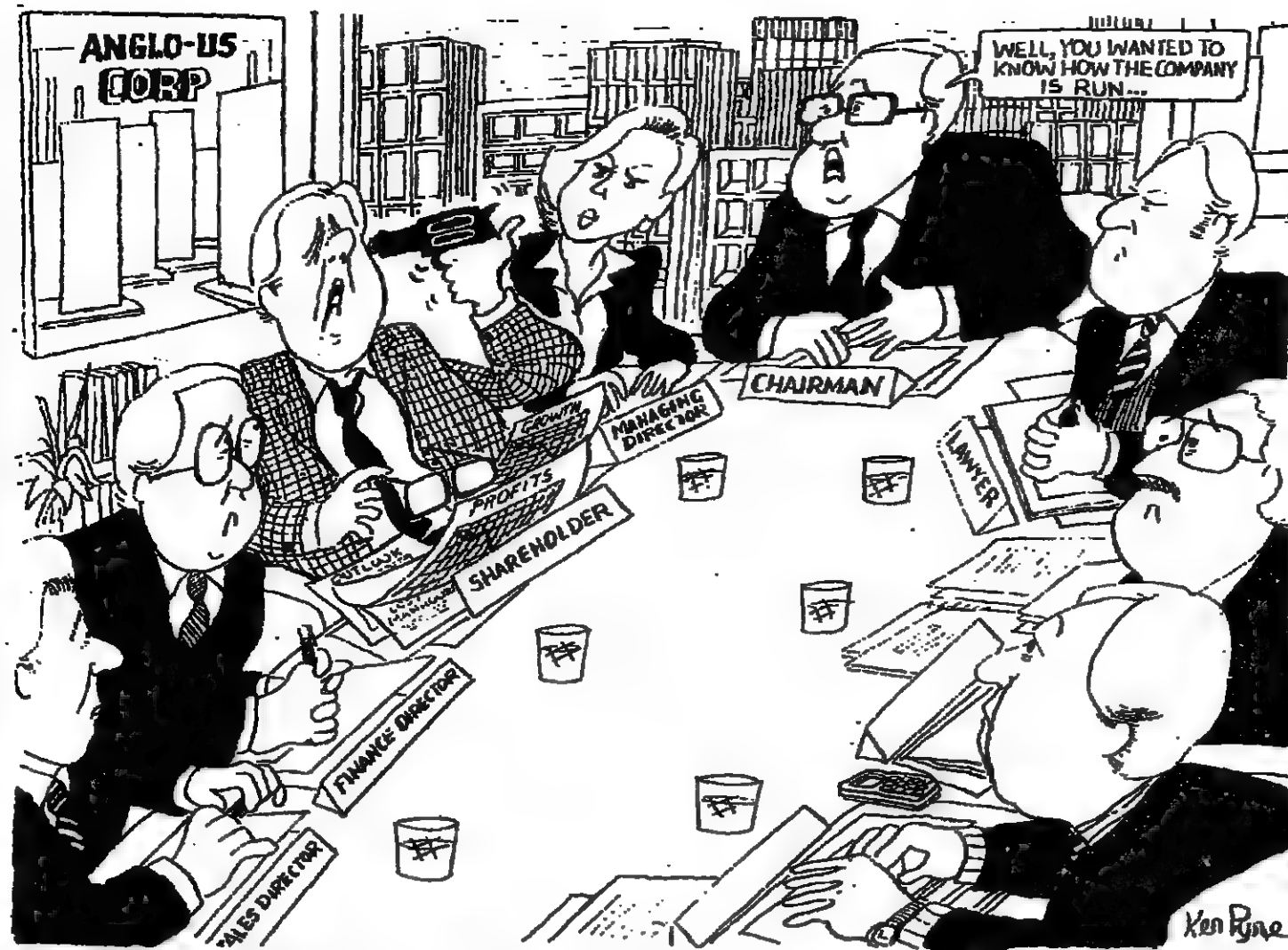
A report on the financial aspects of corporate governance was published last week by Sir Adrian Cadbury's committee. The main recommendation is a code of best practice to "achieve the necessary high standards of corporate behaviour", and the discussion underlying this is similar to that being held in America. Both countries have seen parallel changes and challenges to their corporate lifestyle.

Plunging profits have increased shareholders' demands for more information on how companies are run. The rise in corporate failures during recession has provoked questions about whether improved management accountability and financial responsibility could have prevented, or at least given early warning of, disaster.

The backdrop has been the inexorable increase in the holdings of UK and American listed equities by institutional shareholders. In the UK, institutions now hold about 50 per cent and in America about 47 per cent of listed equities. Institutional investors have a great ability to influence company management and, theoretically, have greater motives for wanting to do so.

In America, a watershed was the publication last July of a statement by a working group of representatives of large public companies and institutional investors outlining corporate governance principles that both "sides" should observe to reduce tensions between the owners and managers of companies.

The statement, entitled "A New Compact for Owners and Directors", sets out the responsibilities respectively of directors and shareholders. The first part contains proposals that are largely in the Cadbury report, such as the reinforcement of non-executive directors' role as an independent check on a company's activities. The second part says shareholders should act as owners rather than investors, taking a long-term view of the company's prospects rather than seeking a short-term gain, and should help to evaluate directors' performance, but should not be involved in day-to-day affairs.



The premise is that if companies observe the requirements of the first part institutional shareholders will accept the principles of the second. The compact has been controversial in some circles. One question is whether institutional shareholders are able to act as "owners" rather than investors in view of their fiduciary duty to obtain the best return for their investors. A second question about achieving full ownership status is whether it can be only "detached ownership" for certain investors because of their widespread practice of distributing funds to numerous external managers whose performance is judged by short-term returns.

Such concerns may have lessened the compact's influence, and recent events in America have shown that the wish of shareholders to participate in day-to-day management, against which the compact cautioned, is increasing. For example, this year a proposal was made in a shareholder's proxy

statement for Exxon's annual meeting to establish a three-member panel to monitor management. Management opposed the inclusion of the proposal, but the Securities and Exchange Commission, the regulatory body, has widened its view of what shareholders may ask to be put to the annual meeting through a company's proxy statement. As a result, the proposal was admitted to the agenda. Previously it probably would have failed because it would have been considered the "ordinary business" of management and inappropriate for shareholder consideration.

This development, if it becomes prevalent, cannot be in anybody's best interests. Management needs to make bona fide decisions freely and quickly, and hindrances reduce the directors' effectiveness. This must be avoided in the UK, and the Cadbury report may help. The report advocates the annual meeting as the forum for share-

holders to express views and says "shareholders can play a more effective governance role by aiming to influence board policies in this way, than by seeking to make the detail of board decision subject to their vote". Shareholders will abide by this only while they feel a company's corporate governance is such that involvement of the kind beginning to appear in America is unnecessary.

To achieve this, definitive principles of good corporate governance must be clearly set out, fully supported and respected by all interested parties. The report already has many of these qualities — for example, a proposal for a broader use of the audit committee — but a response from institutional investors and others must be the next stage, followed by a restatement of principles in the light of their comments.

The Cadbury report recom-

mends the appointment of a group in two years' time to examine compliance with the code. If the appointment produces a permanent monitoring and advisory body, to which managers or investors could turn for what would in effect be a "ruling" on a point of corporate governance, the UK will have made good progress towards solving the problems considered by the Cadbury committee.

At present, America does not appear to be following this path. Unless the working group that published the compact can republish it in light of further discussion among its constituents, America may have to become accustomed to either increased shareholder participation or increased regulation.

Vanni Treves is a senior partner of Macfarlanes and the chairman of BBA Group plc and McKelvie plc. James R. Ukropina is a partner in O'Melveny & Myers, US attorneys, and a non-executive director of a number of American public companies.

Why courts may go high tech

Failed poll tax cases have shown that the law must adopt modern methods

Recent attempts to prosecute poll tax defaulters that failed because of the inadmissibility of computerised evidence in magistrates' courts have emphasised that the law has not kept up with technology. The conduct of everyday life, let alone business, would now be unthinkable without sophisticated information technology. Yet the law is still deciding how to deal with it.

The general principle, of course, is that the "best evidence" available should be used in the courts and there is a feeling that "hard copy", that is, pieces of paper and the original documents, must occupy this primary position.

However, the number of the documents in many cases, particularly fraud cases, is creating huge problems of storage and access. Simply from a pragmatic case management viewpoint, lawyers themselves are making extensive use of litigation support facilities. The leading law firms are already being bombarded with information about sophisticated methods of keeping track of documents, mostly from American consultants, and the further the technologists advance the more complex will become the lawyers' task in judging what they will, and will not, allow to be used in court.

Arthur Andersen, along with other leading accountancy firms such as Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, is now offering support to lawyers in complex cases. The services include one recently imported from America, "Database services", as it is called, provides back-up for lawyers in cases in which a lot of documents have to be organised. Alongside systems for numbering, batching, coding and scanning documents, Arthur Andersen is now offering a "database development" service, which is likely to extend the boundaries of what is admissible in court as evidence.

David Armstrong, of the firm's financial consulting unit, explains: "Database development contains key information about the docu-

ments that are likely to feature in any particular case. What is most remarkable, however, is the way that through its 'image database' it stores copies of the original documents themselves. All key documents will have been photographed and coded and stored on what looks like a compact disc.

"Insert the CD into a computer and instruct it to search for a certain reference and it will produce not just the details of the reference but what looks like a photocopy too of the original document, complete with coffee stains and any other accumulated scrawls." In effect, this means that hundreds of thousands of relevant documents, which traditionally could take up yards of

wall space, can now be kept on one small CD and summoned up at the push of a button. In terms of both storage and accessibility by the court, the benefits could be enormous. Purists, however, are likely to argue that by compromising the integrity of evidence in this way, a sinister precedent would be set. Some lawyers think events may already be moving too fast.

"Many people in business will destroy their hard copy so that information stored electronically will be all that we have," says a City litigator specialising in intellectual property work.

So although it may be a long time before such information, or the electronic images in the image database, will be admissible as evidence, lawyers in the end will probably have to accept the change. One lawyer says: "It is obviously the way we ought to be proceeding because the management of documents for large trials is going to be increasingly dependent on litigation support services."

Balancing fairness and efficiency in the scales of justice is not easy. The paperless office is still not quite with us, but when it has arrived the judges may have to believe the evidence of their own eyes, albeit it via the computer screen.

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LEEDS £Excellent

Our client is a prestigious and highly successful Leeds practice, which over recent years has achieved a continuing record of growth, providing legal services through its specialist departments to banks and other financial institutions, listed and private companies and private clients. Due to sustained growth, vacancies have arisen in the following departments:-

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- * Assistant Solicitor (two to four years' qualified) for high quality corporate work including company and business acquisitions, disposals, corporate finance and management buy-outs.
- * Two Assistant Solicitors (one to three years' qualified) for corporate work, specialising in venture and development capital, management buy-outs and buy-ins principally for major venture capital clients.

COMMERCIAL TAX - Assistant Solicitor (one to three years' qualified) to provide a broad range of sophisticated tax advice mainly to corporate and commercial property clients.

These are excellent opportunities for ambitious Lawyers to make a sound career move to a progressive firm which views the future with great confidence and can offer above market rate salaries and exciting prospects. Our client is an equal opportunities employer.

For further information, please contact ANN BATES, quoting ref: 92L/923T at Daniels Bates Partnership Ltd., Joseph's Well, Hanover Walk, Park Lane, Leeds LS1 1AB - (0532) 461671. YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.

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Rapidly expanding City firm seeks Solicitor to join as Partner Designate handling largely contentious aspects of insolvency. You will have 4+ years' PQE, client contacts important. Ref: 305/LN.

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training and support will be offered as necessary to enable you to develop the necessary specialist expertise. In addition to the salary and leave benefits there is a generous pension scheme including 100% repayment of mortgage and legal costs and the opportunity of temporary housing if needed. For further details please telephone Ben Saunders on 0243 777733 or write to the County Solicitors, County Hall, Chichester PO19 1PQ. Closing date 12th June 1992.

2 ESSEX COURT EUROPEAN LAW GROUP

The Chambers of A.P. Clarke QC wish to expand their European Law Group. Applications for a tenancy based in London are therefore invited from practitioners of at least 8 years call with an established community law-related practice.

Interested applicants should write in confidence to A.P. Clarke QC, enclosing a career summary.

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The successful candidate will be a solicitor or barrister with an excellent academic pedigree, ideally aged 28-35. He or she will need to display a sound practical knowledge of public international law as it affects land, sea and air issues and inter-governmental relations. A practical knowledge of the telecommunications industry and the intellectual property rights fundamental to it would be an advantage.

The salary and benefits package is substantial and reflects the importance attached to this senior position.

For further information in complete confidence please contact Jonathan Brenner on 071-377 0510 (081-332 0733 evenings/weekends) or write to him at Zarak Macrae Brenner, Recruitment Consultants, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PY. Confidential Fax 071-247 5174.

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The successful applicant will enjoy work of the highest calibre, receive a competitive salary, and see real partnership prospects in a high profile, expanding department.

For further information in complete confidence please contact Jonathan Macrae on 071-377 0510 (081-672 8340 evenings/weekends) or write to him at Zarak Macrae Brenner, Recruitment Consultants, 37 Sun Street, London EC2M 2PY. Confidential Fax 071-247 5174.

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A change of direction

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Theodore Goddard, one of the top 20 City firms, is undertaking a major initiative in the development of its Professional Information Services.

We are presently looking for two high calibre lawyers with at least 4 years PQE in the UK, one for our large Corporate Department, and a similarly experienced Commercial lawyer for our rapidly expanding Commercial Department.

Applicants for the Corporate position should have a solid background in general Corporate/Corporate Finance work and, ideally, experience in one or more of the following areas: Banking, Insolvency, Employment/Employee Benefits. Those considering the Commercial Department position should have a background in general Commercial work and, ideally, one or more of the following specialisations: Intellectual Property, IT, Telecommunications, Media, Entertainment, Asset Finance, Aviation and EC law and practice.

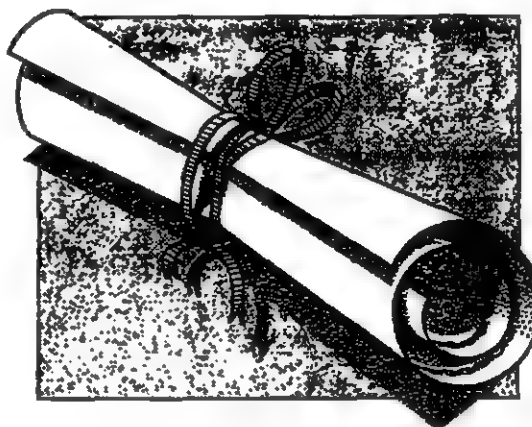
These roles will involve the collation (and, in some cases, the production) of practice materials, including precedents and know how, and research support for internal/external seminars and practice development initiatives. Enthusiasm, drive and commitment to the project is essential, as is the ability to work as a member of a team.

The rewards include an excellent remuneration package.

If you wish to apply for one of these positions, please send your full CV to Sheila Hares (Mrs), Personnel Manager, Theodore Goddard, 150 Aldersgate Street, London EC1A 4EL.

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The Crown Prosecution Service is an equal opportunities employer and applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates regardless of sex, race or disability.



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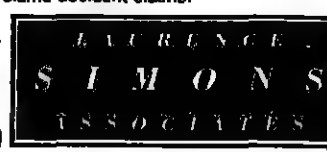
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PERSONNEL RESOURCES

LEGAL DIVISION

TUESDAY JUNE 2 1992

Keown the odd man out in England side

Taylor's team drawn from Robson's cast

FROM STUART JONES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT
IN HELSINKI

GRAHAM Taylor yesterday unveiled the England team which will challenge for the European championship. Providing there are no unforeseen hitches in the dress rehearsal here in the Olympic Stadium tomorrow night, the same line-up will open the tournament against Denmark in Malmö on June 11.

After spending two years auditioning 51 players, he has reverted more or less to the same cast chosen by Bobby Robson in the last World Cup. With the exception of Martin Keown, everybody else not only went to Italy but also actively contributed there.

As well as relying on experience, Taylor has put his faith in the defensive system boldly introduced by his predecessor, England, protected by three central defenders initially against the Netherlands, went on to finish fourth and might, with luck, have won the trophy.

Taylor, who wrote for *The Times* while he was in Italy, saw how effective the formation was and how comfortably the players responded to it.

Ever since he took over from Robson, he revealed yesterday, he intended to use it.

TEAM
G. Woods (Sheffield Wed), G. Stevens (Barnsley), S. Pearce (Nottingham Forest), M. Keown (Everton), D. Walker (Sunderland), M. Wright (Liverpool), D. Platt (Sheff Wed), T. Steven (Middlesbrough), N. Webb (Manchester United), G. Lineker (Tottenham), J. Barnes (Liverpool).

himself for the European championship finals.

"Our record shows that we know how to play 4-2-4 but it hasn't won us anything since the World Cup in 1966. That is over a quarter of a century ago," he said. "We should have learned the lesson by now and applied it."

"Some players feel that we ought to change the formation and I don't disagree. Systems don't win or lose games, mind you. Players do. Systems won't take care of inaccurate passing, bad marking, a reluctance to shoot or an unwillingness to work hard."

"Even though we've done well, our defence has had some problems and I knew we would have to do some rethinking. I regard this as a progressive move and we shall see if it helps out. If not, we know we can always go back to 4-2-4 if we need to."

Keown has earned the right to retain his place as one of the markers but there are misgivings about his reliability against the calibre of the forwards he is about to at-

tempt to restrain. There are no such doubts about Walker, whose excellence has long been taken for granted.

Stuart Pearce's recovery from injury is comforting but that sustained by Rob Jones has left a potential flaw at right back. Gary Stevens is prone to the odd and potentially costly error. Taylor admits that Jones would have been in his side and so, ideally would Paul Gascoigne, presumably in place of Neil Webb.

Webb, described by the England manager as typical of the old "attacking wing half", and David Platt, an example of "an all-action inside forward", will be supported in midfield by Trevor Steven, "the continuity player". Together, they should offer invention as well as industry in an area too often filled recently by mediocrity.

The most significant part will be played by John Barnes. His recuperation within the confines of the isolated training camp has exceeded hopes and Taylor, who was planning to use him only as a substitute, was convinced instead that he should start against Finland tomorrow.

He may not finish and Taylor warns against expecting too much from the enigmatic winger who played in a mere 17 games over the season. Nevertheless, Barnes represents the difference between a solid unit capable of reaching the semi-finals and a side unpredictable enough to claim the ultimate prize.

He is to be given the onerous responsibility of a free role. In Taylor's words, he can "play as only John Barnes can. He can give us width on either flank or move along the front line wherever he wants. Our job is to provide as many chances as we can for Gary Lineker. His job is to put them away."

In response to the criticism that he has experimented too freely with personnel and formations, he claims that he has never before been able to field "these ten proven internationalists" and Keown.

The opportunity has arisen just before the curtain rises in Sweden and Taylor must trust that the prolonged wait has been worthwhile.



Net gain: Leconte employs the volley in his victory over Filippini at the French Open yesterday

Wiser Leconte marches on

FROM ANDREW LONGMORE, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT, IN PARIS

DELIGHT and frustration have been such close companions for Henri Leconte down the years that it should be no surprise to find him in the quarter-final of the French Open. Just three weeks before the start of the tournament, he was feeling so jaded he wanted to give the game up for three months.

With due respect to his opponent, Marcelo Filippini, the danger for the Frenchman yesterday came more from the possibility of anticlimax after his crushing victory over Michael Stich, the Wimbledon champion, than from the Uruguayan's gentle skills. But, according to Leconte at least, this is a wiser, more reflective version of the dashing left-hander who was jeered off court after the French Open final in 1988, and he was alive to the possibility of over-elaboration.

"I manage my tennis better. I can win a point without exaggerating. Sometimes some shots escape me but I am able to play the right shot and not fall into euphoria," he said. "I think I am more experienced now."

That does not stop him from charging to the net like a fence about to strike, nor does it necessarily mean he will play sensibly against

Nicklas Kulti in the quarter-final tomorrow. But there was a businesslike efficiency about Leconte's 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 victory and a marked absence of the arm-pumping histrionics which have made him one of the most popular performers of the world over. This Leconte is aware of his limitations and is all the more dangerous because of it.

"I did feel more pressure than against Stich. The difference now is that I am not thinking about tennis every second of every day. I am more relaxed than before," he said.

Relaxation has never been Pete Sampras's problem. Just the opposite, in fact. The quiet American, who has been tipped to win Wimbledon, is finding out that clay-court tennis might not be as foreign to his nature as he first thought. In beating Carl-Uwe Steeb in straight sets yesterday, he found exactly the right balance between power and patience, and never allowed the German a chance to settle into a rhythm. "He is a hard-court player," Steeb said. "But he is clearly very dangerous on clay too."

Sampras, one of three Americans in the quarter-finals, attributes his improve-

ment to the simple matter of hard work. Commendably, he has put his mind to adapting to clay, playing five clay-court events in preparation for Paris, and he has been aided by the speed of the courts at Roland Garros. "It is a surface you can definitely serve and volley on and be aggressive," he said.

Sixteen aces and a string of fast accurate second serves proved the point and demoralised Steeb, whose chin dropped markedly when he lost the second set. "I think that was the best I have ever played on clay," Sampras said.

He will need to play even better today to beat Andre



Bollegraf: Dutch star

Agassi, who was not quite as convincing in finishing off Emilio Sanchez as he had been the previous day in making the first two sets. Still, it was a marked improvement on his last effort, when he was soundly beaten by the Spaniard in March. "I am close to being 100 per cent better than I was then," he said.

Petr Korda and Andrei Cherkasov also came through to the last eight in straight sets. They will play each other for a place in the semi-final against either Kulti or Leconte. Kulti, a former junior world champion, was just too strong and well organised for Diego Perez, the day's second Uruguayan. He has played 18 sets of tennis to reach his first grand slam tournament quarter-final, but, a true Swede, he shows no sign of being overawed. Provided it does not all catch up with him, he will test Leconte's new-found tranquillity to the full.

To cap an excellent day for the Americans, Jennifer Capriati proved too consistent and too smart for Mary Pierce. Pierce holds triple citizenship — US, French and Canadian — and has not quite sorted out her game either. She has almost as hard as her father, who punched two court-side hecklers during his daughter's third round, but Capriati, the No. 5 seed, kept her composure to win 6-4, 6-3 and earn a quarter-final against Monica Seles — she won their last meeting in Key Biscayne — while Manon Bollegraf became the first Dutch woman to reach this stage of a grand slam tournament since 1971.

QUARTER-FINALS: Men's singles: P. Korda (US) v G. Sanchez (ESP), 6-2, 6-3; A. Agassi (US) v A. Cherkasov (CIS), 6-4, 6-3; J. Capriati (US) v M. Pierce (FRA), 6-4, 6-3; M. Bollegraf (NED) v J. Seveschi (ITA), 6-4, 6-3.

More cricket, page 32

Walker makes strides to manage Norwich

MIKE Walker was yesterday appointed manager of Norwich City, stepping up from his job in charge of the reserves at Carrow Road. He succeeds Dave Stringer.

His assistant will be a former forward at the club, John Deehan, which means there is no place for David Williams, the No. 2 last season.

The former Liverpool and England defender, Phil Neal, turned down the chance to take the job because he was not prepared to move his family to East Anglia. The club's chairman, Robert Chase, rejected Neal's plan to commute from Liverpool.

Walker, aged 46, a former

manager of Colchester, said: "I'm looking forward to the new challenge and I hope John Deehan's influence will make us a more forceful unit."

"I have been a rather long draw... but I am delighted... the way things have worked out. We are in the Premier League, we want to entertain and I am determined to see us being an aggressive, attractive and attacking footballing side."

Deehan was a firm favourite at Norwich during the 1980s and, for the past three seasons, he has been assistant to the former Norwich coach, Mel Machin, at Barnsley.

IOC ready to vote on expulsion

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) will decide this month whether to expel Yugoslavia from the Barcelona Games after the United Nations (UN) ban on sporting links.

The IOC Information director, Michele Verdier, said yesterday the executive board would make the decision. No date had been set for a session, but it would meet this month.

The UN security council voted on Saturday to forbid any country from allowing athletes or teams representing Yugoslavia to play on its territory.

David Miller, page 33

Ivanisevic and Seles split on their political role

FROM ANDREW LONGMORE

THE people of Croatia have other things on their mind at present, but not even the destruction of civil war can spoil their sport. This afternoon, on the centre court in Roland Garros, their champion, Goran Ivanisevic, will play Jim Courier for a place in the semi-final of the French Open. As much of Croatia that can find a television set will forget the troubles and watch.

"Everyone not on the front will see it, even if they are huddled in basements and burnt-out buildings," Milo Dusanovic, head of sport for Croatian television, said. "The Serbs have destroyed seven out of nine of our transmitters, but we have still managed to operate dur-

ing the war. We have tricked them."

With a virtual news blackout in Croatia, Ivanisevic's tennis and his unequivocal support for the cause has been an important factor in the struggle for independence.

Ivanisevic, who is from Split, and his compatriot, Goran Prpic, have taken every opportunity to talk about the war and, while they have consistently condemned the carnage, they have left nobody in doubt which side they are on.

Monika Seles, on the other hand, has sat firmly on the fence amid the troubles, an attitude that has riled Ivanisevic and strained their long-standing friendship. Two days ago, Ivanisevic suggested that Seles "didn't

care" about her country and when asked in a radio interview who he thought Seles played for, allegedly replied "for her black hair".

Seles has maintained a silence that is either dignified or craven, depending on your outlook.

"She must know what is going on and she must take some responsibility for talking about it," Dusanovic said. "She is the best player in the world and she must say something. We are very disappointed with her."

Seles, though, is in a more delicate position than Ivanisevic. She is from Vojvodina, a small enclave within Serbia that enjoys enough independence to run its own police force and which accommodates at least 30 different ethnic minorities, including

Hungarian. Her father, Karoly, is Hungarian and Seles speaks Hungarian within the family, but is also fluent in Serbo-Croat. Vojvodina has largely stayed free from the troubles and, with relatives still in her home town of Novi Sad, Seles is understandably wary of stirring up trouble unnecessarily.

Underlying Ivanisevic's criticism, though, is the widespread feeling that, like Martina Navratilova and Ivan Lendl, Seles will forsake her country and take US citizenship. She has been living in Florida for the past six years and would qualify for a passport soon on the grounds of residency.

"She doesn't need a US passport," Alex Pasternak, editor of a sports magazine

in Slovenia, said. "As Gary Kasparov, the chess player, says, 'Why should I change when I can have the best of east and west?' She is not closing the door if she wishes to come back."

It is a faint hope that she will be persuaded to return to Yugoslavia, even when she has retired. But the threat that the UN sanctions might spread to individuals as well as teams could finally persuade her that becoming a US citizen would be the safest option.

Meanwhile, Dusanovic is convinced that banning the Yugoslavs from the European football championship, the Olympics and national team events in tennis such as the Davis Cup and Federation Cup will have an immediate and dramatic effect on

Stewart to work with the young

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

MICKY Stewart, who today begins supervising the England preparations for a Test series for the last time, has had his future in the game guaranteed when he retires as team manager in September.

Stewart, I understand, will remain in the full-time employment of the Test and County Cricket Board within a post specially created for him. He is to oversee and administer all aspects of youth cricket, a position in which his organisational skills will be fully utilised. He will work under the auspices of the England committee and in close contact with his successor as manager, Keith Fletcher.

It had never seemed likely that Stewart would be lost to cricket when his six-year tenure on the England job expires. He will celebrate his sixtieth birthday in September but his energy and enthusiasm for the game remain as strong as ever.

The concentration on youth development was specifically recommended in the report made by a recent working party into the function and performance of the England committee. It has been planned, ever since then, to make an appointment in this area and Stewart was always envisaged as the man for the job.

An announcement, by the TCCB, will come when the job description has been fully detailed, and this requires co-operation with the National Cricket Association (NCA), which is responsible for all English cricket beneath first-class level.

The NCA already has, in Keith Andrew, a director of coaching, Andrew, however, doubles as chief executive and is also due for retirement in 1994. Some of his coaching responsibilities might necessarily pass to Stewart under the new arrangement and communication between the TCCB and NCA may be strengthened as a result.

The Development of Excellence programme, sponsored by Bull, has done much for cricket at under-15 and under-19 level, with tours to England being made this summer by South Africa and Sri Lanka respectively. Stewart will want to extend the England involvement and, particularly, promote an under-17 team.

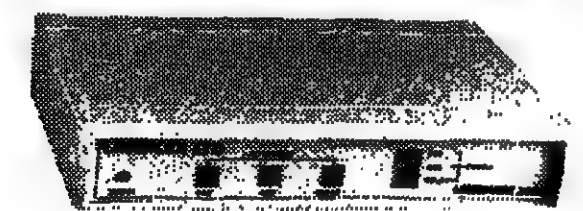
Stewart's more immediate priority is to help the senior England side beat Pakistan at Edgbaston, starting on Thursday, and already he is confronted by an injury worry, Derek Pringle reporting a swollen knee after colliding with an advertising board at Worcester on Sunday.

"We are not terribly perturbed at the moment," Stewart said, discounting any hasty call for reinforcements. It will doubtless have occurred to Stewart, however, that England's fitness troubles, already chronic with the absence of Fraser, Lawrence and Tufnell, are deteriorating even as Pakistan's seem to be receding.

Waqar Younis seems certain to play on Thursday and will probably have Wasim Akram back as his new-ball partner. That contingency seemed fanciful no more than a week ago.

More cricket, page 32

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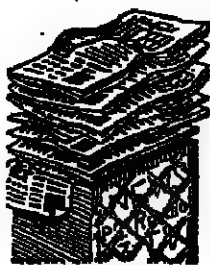
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MEDIA p10.11
Will growing
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LIFE & TIMES

TUESDAY JUNE 2 1992

PARENTS p4
Virginia
Ironsides on
troubles that
never leave



A nation living at ease with itself

Have the English created a fantasy
France to ease their own cultural
confusion? Stephen Bayley looks for the
essential truth of *le style français*

The maxim "Love France, hate the French" is frequently invoked by Englishmen at a loss to understand the totality of the neighbouring culture. France is a totality, much more so than Britain. Of course, the French have as many social classes as we do, but the difference is that the French class system is cohesive, not divisive. Frenchmen of all backgrounds share similar tastes. To separate the people and their country is to admit defeat in matters of comprehension.

The French have a saying "le style est l'homme" whose sense betrays a national conviction that form and content are not distinct, but the one the expression of the other. Equally, to speak of *le style français*, that characteristic collection of habits, forms and manners, the sum of the proclivities and customs of the people, is not affection, but an eloquent expression of a civilisation more at ease with itself than ours. The latest evidence of the love/hate schism is Peter Mayle who writes of Provence rather as you would expect of an adman. Mayle loves France and patronises the French. His Provence is a saccharin confection, glazed and glossy, sanitised and prettified. He has introduced a whole generation who have never got nearer *la France profonde* than a trip to the Calais Marmouth or the local Renault dealer to a dazzling narrative of a *House and Garden* roomset with walk-on parts for the colourful *châuffagiste* and the wily *chasseur*.

But Mayle is only the slickest, not the first. In 1935 Winifred Fortescue published *Perfume from Provence*. Lady Fortescue's style of bemused, beaming, indulgent, patronising superiority anticipates Mayle's similar, conventional. She wrote of pre-Mayle Provencals: "They were perfectly maddening, entirely without initiative and quite irresponsible, but they were most lovable."

In the half century between Fortescue and Mayle the English have journeyed through real and imaginary France maintaining visions that are precious and distinctive. The France of lovable, but cunning, peasants, of fantasy breakfasts, lunches, colourful markets and dappled sunshine is no less profound because it is not

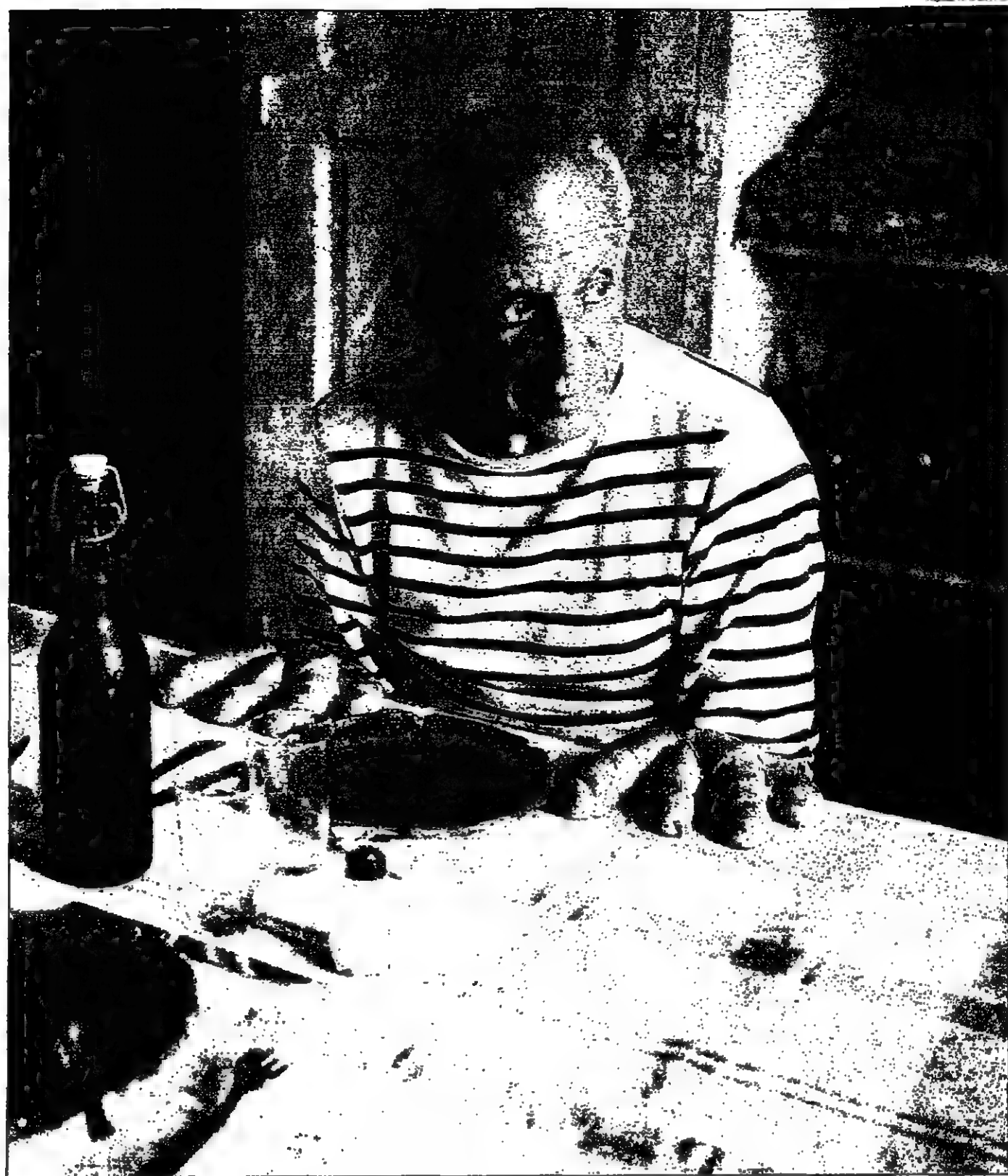
entirely real. The topography of the countries we construct in the imagination speaks volumes about our own: it is worth saying that the love of France which made Peter Mayle a bestseller is a novelty. France, as readers of Smollett and Sterne know, was once regarded as risibly dirty and backward, the French as skulking schemers or dastardly, perfumed high-minded cheats. At Marquise, just outside Calais, Lord Nelson was "... shown an inn — they called it — I should have called it a pigsty: we were shown into a room with two straw beds, and, with great difficulty, they mustered up clean sheets, and gave us two pigeons for supper, upon a dirty cloth, and wooden-handled knives."

What a transition from happy England! The France of Fortescue and Mayle is not the underworld France of Jean Genet or the suburban France of Robert Doisneau, just as ours is not a particularly happy England. It is the Englishman's France, a great imaginative work created to serve our current emotional needs. France represents what we have lost: in particular, this huge, uncrowded country has a pastoral life which is almost real. It has, or so it seems, traditions of cooking and hospitality which are ignorant of portion control and dedicated to pleasure as much as to nutrition or shelter. It has a national style which is borne of natural convictions, not of concepts fabricated by some wally from the tourist industry.

See a picturesque French village and, if you are lucky, there will be someone there who smokes ham, a farmer who makes cheese, a baker who bakes bread. See a picturesque English village and you just sit it out and wait for the Walls, Dairy Crest and Mother's Pride trucks.

Food is the most complete expression of French style. "Mayonnaise" according to Ambrose Bierce, is "... one of the sauces which serve the French in place of a state religion". It is not just because we find their food so delicious that we revere France, but because the attention to food suggests sympathy for day-to-day human endeavour: a respect for normality is the basis of the real French style and this is shared by all classes.

In *The Alice B. Toklas Cookbook* (1954) Gertrude Stein's famous companion writes: "The French approach to food is characteristic;



The art of life: this famous photograph of Picasso helped to create an image which still speaks eloquently of the French idyll

they bring to their consideration of the table the same appreciation, respect, intelligence and lively interest they have for the other arts... I have heard working men in Paris discuss the way their wives prepare a beef stew as it is cooked in Burgundy, or the way a cabbage is cooked with salt pork and browned in the oven."

France gave us the word *élite*, but the more you get to know French culture, the more you appreciate that its real quality lies in its ordinariness. "High" French culture is remote, aloof and cold. There are the starchy tropes of Racine, the frigid classicism of Poussin, or the funereal, marmoreal rhythms of Couperin. According to Horace Walpole "The French affect philosophy, literature and free-thinking".

Maybe they did, but we appreciate best the *chanteuse* or *Doisneau's* charming, warm pictures of street life. It was Doisneau, the Renault factory photographer, who took the famous picture of Picasso with the bread rolls. Here, in Vallauris, one sunny afternoon, the great Franco-Catalan posed in his *put marin* and lent himself to an image which still speaks eloquently of the French Mediterranean idyll. The Madras table cloth, the stoppered bottle of wine, the expectation of wit and serious pleasure: Doisneau captured an

encyclopaedia of French meaning in one clever image.

Of course, there is another sort of French style, the more self-conscious, more arrogant, less assured world of French "design", although it is noteworthy that even today France has fewer celebrity designers than Italy, Germany, or even Britain. Like French classicism, and the culture of the *Académies*, French design tends to be stilted and aloof (because it is so removed from popular taste). The few personalities who do emerge are eccentric figures. Roger Tallon, for instance, the designer of SNCF's "Corail" locomotives and the man who gave the TGV its distinctive snoot; or Olivier Mourgue, the polyurethane furniture designer of the Sixties whose futuristic shapes so impressed Stanley Kubrick that he used Mourgue's furniture in 2001. Or more recently, André Putnam. These are great names, but they are oddities. Design is not an institution in France.

This is because in France ordinary things tend to be so excellent that the application of superior aesthetic intelligence to them is neither necessary nor possible. You might be very proud of your Roger Tallon Lipp watch, your Olivier Mourgue airport furniture, your stylised Starck toothbrush or Ms Putnam's monochrome interior, but they do not compare in quality

or humanity to the vernacular things which your neighbours own: a Duralex glass, simple white Apilco crockery, a Bic pen, a Velosolex, a Citroën 2CV. The little Citroën is surely the most complete single statement of "le style français": an automobile designed solely to satisfy certain demands of functional transport, but one which does so with great charm and with unforced style.

In contrast to the triumphs of French vernacular, "high" French design appears absurd, not least because it is so arch and often so uncomfortable. A sense of simple luxury is fundamental to the style of France: even Le Corbusier's most severe machine age furniture of the Twenties had, with its plump leather cushions or its pony skin, a luxurious character. There is this sense, too, in Doisneau's Picasso, so powerfully suggestive of an earthly sort of *lux, calme et volupté*, the ingredients of a perfect holiday. For the English, France means holidays with all the bitter-sweet associations they have. The very idea of France produces pleasure because it summons up what the sociologists call "anticipatory socialisation". Think of France and you don't think of HLM projects in Nanterre or Argenteuil, but of over-warm baguettes, fresh basil and delicious, rough wine. You think of baking in the sun after

lunch. You think maybe Picasso lived like this.

You think, too, of everything associated with eating and travel. More than anything else the Michelin guides summarise *le style français*: the reconciliation of food and motoring is one of the century's great cultural achievements and one that is distinctively French. Although France gave us the terms "chic" and "haute couture" these are only remote, tinselly peaks of French culture. If you want to understand French style, you don't want to go to a boutique or a couturier, but to bury yourself in the Michelin rouge, both a guide to and a symbol of the country and culture it represents.

Michelin is based on practical, systematic research presented to the reader in an elegantly, no-nonsense

It has a national
style borne of
natural
convictions, not of
concepts
fabricated by
some wally from
the tourist board

way. In this it is characteristically French. Above all, the Michelin guides are useful. They employ a symbology which is wilful and eccentric, but workable. The important thing to understand about Michelin is that its recommendations represent a total culture. Naturally, there are gradations in Michelin's assessment of restaurants and hotels, but the meanest little *hôtel de passe* in Toulon is connected to the awesome Crillon by a shared set of values and each has its place on the national spectrum of quality.

Most of all, Michelin conjures up for map-reading voyeurs that special magic of France that creates such an elegiac longing in the English. *Le style français* is not some precious essay in the peculiar furniture of Philippe Starck or the austere mediagenic interiors of André Putnam, or whomsoever *Marie Claire* is photographing this month, but maps, systems and the prospect of a delicious lunch, which is connected to dinner by a journey in a comfortable car. This will be something useable, but also something adventurously designed. Today it might be a Citroën XM, but in the imagination it would always be a Citroën DS.

For the post-war generation, life has very few things more to offer than being in France one sunny afternoon. We have just had lunch, somewhere in La Corréze and now there is the prospect of a long drive to a late dinner in La Baule. The sun is shining and it is hot, but our last meal has relaxed us, as fine food always does. The big Citroën lopes along the fast, straight roads. The seats are comfortable, the suspension pliant. In France, real luxury is an everyday thing.

Maybe if someone else is driving we are flicking through the latest Jean-François Revel and musing on what characterises French style. Michelin rouge and all it stands for, certainly. A big Citroën, without question. French style is like a bidet, something at once odd, but also very convenient. *Le style français* is not something narrow, limited and self-conscious. French style is an attitude to ordinary things. Love France, love life.

TOMORROW

Flavour is all: Frances Bissell, the *Times* cook, on French food

Isn't that our tune they're playing, my lord?

Now what am I supposed to do? Without so much as a by-your-leave or a quiet bargaining session in chambers, the new Lord Chief Justice of England has swiped half my list. I was always going to have Sidney Bechet playing *Petite Fleur*. The trio "Soave sia il vento" from *Così fan tutte* has been my record number five for three years, since it was played at my father's funeral; and Fats Waller's solo piano has always been one of my essential accompaniments, figuring on every list for the last twenty years.

Lord Taylor of Gosforth included every one of these choices for his Desert Island sojourn last week; and then, not content with that unlicensed cribbing, he collared *War and Peace* as his book. It makes you wonder whether somebody has been reading my mail or listening to my telephone conversations. His Lordship graciously did not intrude upon my choices of Big Bill Broonzy, Miles Davis and an evening raga from northern Punjab. Even so, I can see that I'm going to have to tear up my list and start all over again because, if the call does ever come, that disciplinary chit Ms Lawley is bound to say, "Come, come, my Lord: do try to be original: it's unbecomingly to plagiarise."

Middle age is a dangerous time for dotiness. An obsession with *Desert Island Discs* — or *DID*, as we *frankies* are wont to call it — may be one of the more harmless symptoms of the onward rush of senescence but it can be worrying all the same: if you don't look out, you might end up like Richard Ingrams, who seems to feel that the choice of presenter for *DID* is a more crucial and sensitive decision than the appointment of Lord Chief Justice. If you catch yourself mourning for the lost Plomley more than once a month, you may consider yourself unduly close to the bath-chair at the funny farm.

Herbert Morrison, it is said, carried his list of discs in his wallet until the day he died and no failure or disappointment in his life grieved him more than the absence of an invitation to that distant paradise at Broadcasting House. I never felt much curiosity about the records Morrison might have chosen, imagining them to consist largely of the massed pipes of the LCC waterworks or the sound of London Transport buses running on time; but I would have loved to know his choice of luxury: would it have been the gift of ten minutes as Prime Minister? Or the skin of Clement Attlee?

The older I get, the more I find

MID-LIFE

Neil Lyndon finds
himself sharing a
desert island



that I worry about the luxury. Until I was mugged by Lord Taylor last week, my choice of music had remained largely settled for nearly a decade; but I have been dithering in a restless quandary over the luxury; and this torment has been deepened late by Ms Lawley's increasing tendency to question or even to refuse her castaways' requests.

John Major wanted a full-size replica of the Oval cricket ground on his desert island, complete with bowling machine. Lawley chuckled and bemused and said she wasn't quite sure it could be allowed. The most powerful man in Britain just squawked it.

Then she got all game-wardenish about a castaway's desire for a stretch of good fly-fishing water. "We'll have to start cracking down on these property developments," she said. Most recently, she pursued her lips over Michael Grade's innocent request to have Alan Bennett's reading of *The Wind in the Willows* for his book.

Well, I mean: lighten up, Ms Lawley, will you? What, after all, is the point of receiving the highest honour in our national life if it doesn't bring with it the complete fulfilment of fantasy and desire? Roy Plomley might cavil but he would never refuse: ah, how we miss him.

I couldn't make up my mind whether I wanted every movie produced in Hollywood from 1917 to the present day or the Rembrandt self-portrait in the National Gallery in Washington. Each choice involved terrible problems, chiefly of storage.

How would you keep all that old celluloid cool enough to prevent it

from exploding? How would you keep the oils and canvases of the Rembrandt safe from the sun and the wind? Dear, dear, Such worries.

With Sue Lawley in her present mood of negation, exercising the *non placet* as every turn, you know that you might as well not bother to give the luxury any serious thought. She will only consent to something mundane like a solar-powered laptop or a swimming pool full of champagne. The Lord Chief Justice asked for a grand piano (do try to be original, my Lord).

Even then, Lawley found cause for nitpicking: he could only have it, she said, if he promised not to live beneath it. His Lordship was puzzled: why would anybody seek shelter under a grand piano, was the apparent tone of his reply.

I think I'm going to have to issue a warning. If Sue Lawley carries on like this about the luxury, I'm not sure that I shall want to go. Without prejudice, I offer this sentiment to Olivia Seligman, producer of *DID*: I'll tear up my list and try to forget all about it and you can strike my name off the register of those you are just about to call. Deal?

Don't say that it was never going to cross your mind to call: you wouldn't want to hurt a dotty old chap's feelings.

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ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

THE PHILHARMONIA Semyon Bychkov conducts the Philharmonia with Ravi Shankar, piano. The performance includes Wagner's *Prelude to Die Meistersinger*, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 1 and Symphony No 4 by Brahms. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8800). Tonight, 7.30pm.

MY FAIR LADY The Lerner and Loewe musical gets an evocative new look from stage designer David Fielding (echoing his work with English National Opera) and costumer Jasper Conran. Edward Fox is cast in the "Merchandise" role of Professor Higgins, Helen Hobson is an eminently believable Eliza Doolittle and Michael Medwin plays Colonel Pickens. The production is touring the regions. Playhouse Theatre, 18 Greenidge Place, Edinburgh (031-557 2621). Tonight-Tue, 7.30pm, Wed, Sat, 2.30pm.

ANGELA FLOWERS When all about are leopards, flowers and the East End home of the Angela Flowers Gallery, has related the opportunity offered by the restoration to acquire vast new additional premises. They are immediately opposite the present gallery and comprise four gallery spaces on three floors. The first section to open is on the ground floor, with a show of new additions to the gallery's collection of modern British art. Angela Flowers Gallery at London Fields, 282 Richmond Road, London E8 (081-985 3333). Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm, open today until July 2.

JOHN TO GILBERT The Fine Art Society's long-standing commitment to the "New Sculpture" of the late 19th century has expressed local interest in their acquisition of one of the

TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Heather Alston

major private collections of British sculpture between 1840 and 1914. All the names are present in the important show - Gilbert Bayes, George Frampton, Alfred Gilbert, Goscombe John, Hamo Thornycroft - along with visitors to Britain like Carpeaux and Dado, and occasional highly expressive sculptors such as Rodin. It is very clear why the British were great patrons of sculpture then, and a mystery why the habit faded after 1914.

JOAN ARMSTRONG This versatile performer has just released her 15th album but the warm, distinctive voice sounds as fresh as ever. She is ably supported by emotive songwriters. Joan's new album, *The Four Seasons*, is available on cassette and CD. Joan's new album, *The Four Seasons*, is available on cassette and CD. Joan's new album, *The Four Seasons*, is available on cassette and CD.

MAINTENANCE MUSIC FESTIVAL The first concert in the series, *A Singularity of Voice*, is a celebration for

Bret, perform together. The concert will include works by Guy Vernez, Purcell, Arne, Handel and Walton. Mon, Tuesday, a concert given by the Allegri String Quartet. St Marylebone Church, Marylebone Road, NW1 (071-413 1443). Tonight, 7.45pm, next Tues, 7.45pm.

STEVIE WONDER The soul supreme embarks on his "Natural Wonder" tour designed to depict with type and high-tech in order to "let the music speak", as he puts it. He performs with his band and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Wembley Arena, London (01-900 1234). Today, tomorrow, 7.30pm.

BALLET DU THEATRE DE LA VILLE The French company, based in Strasbourg, is presenting the British debut of this French company, a reconstruction of the original choreography and score of La Fille mal gardée, which has undergone many changes since it was first performed in Bordeaux in 1789.

FLIGHT TO FINLAND The Night Size theatre company continues at BAC with *Flight to Finland*. The physical theatre company uses acrobatics, magic and music to create a surreal world. In this work, directed by Joe Hovatta, a Finnish tale set with a French

ROCK

Lights, cameras and Achtung

U2
Earls Court

WITH typical strength of purpose and guile, U2 have forestalled the backlash which began gathering momentum with their *Rattle and Hum* album in 1988. Their efforts to counter the perception of them as a remote, stadium goliath began with the release last year of the comparatively left-field *Achtung Baby*. The strategy of performing once only, at an indoor venue, in each town visited on the current "Zoo TV" world tour has further enhanced their credibility, while generating added excitement because of the intense demand for tickets. Bono's apologies towards the end of the show, for the ordeal which most people had endured in order to purchase a ticket, rang slightly hollow to those involved.

But nowhere is the group's recent change of tack more apparent than in the new-look live show itself. Whereas in the past, U2 have employed only the most simple of visual and theatrical effects to illustrate their music, here the stage was dressed with an arsenal of television screens and overhead by seven psychedelic Trabant cars, converted into eccentric lighting pods.

During the opening number, "Zoo Station", the audience was bombarded by a flood of hazy, disconnected images. Then, during "The Fly", a succession of words and handwritten slogans such as "We Are All a Part of the Machine" and "Celebrity is a Job", flashed up, teasing and engaging the attention almost as much as the music.

As a signifier of the modern media overload, this was a neat if unoriginal ploy, but the net effect was distracting as much as it was entertaining. There was a nagging feeling that the transformation of U2's unadorned style of presentation into this art, self-conscious extravaganza had not been accomplished without loss of focus.

For the next 45 minutes or so, they

worked their way at a leisurely pace through most of *Achtung Baby*. Bono, dressed in shiny black leather, dumped around while The Edge with his head swathed in the customary tea towel, maintained a modest presence, his guitar playing confined mainly to his chiming riffs and rhythm work, with only an occasional burst of noise poured like scalding liquid into the mounds of "Until The End of the World" and "Blue Sky".

Bono, too, performed with fewer histrionics and a greater sense of irony than in the past. This did not stop him hugging and kissing the imperious bassist Adam Clayton, spraying champagne all over the place like a rock 'n' roll version of Nigel Mansell, and hauling the obligatory young woman from the audience for a dreamy clinch during "Trying to Throw Your Arms Around the World". She was then entrusted with a hand-held camera and as she videoed the band, so her efforts were relayed on the screens above the stage.

Changing pace, the four musicians relocated to a smaller stage, as halfway back in the middle of the audience. With drummer Larry Mullen banging about on a set of congas, they performed a cheerful, busker-like version of "Angel of Harlem". This was the cue for the hi-tech trickery to wind down and a parade of comfortable old favourites to get underway, among them "Pride (In the Name of Love)" and "Where the Streets Have No Name", during which Bono sang the first verse in the deadpan style of Neil Tennant of Pet Shop Boys, who enjoyed a hit with the song last year.



Less histrionic than before? Bono of U2 on stage at Earls Court

Bono returned for an encore of "Desire" wearing a gold lame suit and cowboy hat, acting the part of a grossly narcissistic caricature with little apparent difficulty, while pictures of Richard Nixon, Margaret Thatcher and Galtz flashed up on the screens and showers

of (presumably) fake bank-notes rained down from the ceiling. The message was not hard to spot, but like the rest of this show, the medium was a little surplus to requirements.

DAVID SINCLAIR

THE ALCHMIST David Bradley and Jonathan Hyde mimic coming the town in Sam Mendes's very funny production of Jonson's satire. Barbican, St. St. St. EC2 (071-438 8811). Tonight, 7.30pm, 13.30pm.

ANGELS IN AMERICA Thrilling performances in Tony Kushner's landmark state-of-the-Union drama on AIDS, religion, politics, and the American dream. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Tonight, tomorrow, 7.15pm, next today, 1.30pm, 2.10pm.

THE BLUE ANGEL Kelly Hunter and Philip Macdonald in Trevor Nunn's intoxicating production: the angel of desire becomes the demon of destruction. Globe, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 5065). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, next Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15.00pm.

BODY AND SOUL Sex change, warmed and other contemporary issues in a play, some have tested, others have cheered. Albany Theatre, St. Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-871 1111). Mon-Sat, 8pm, next Thurs, Sat, 3pm, 15.00pm.

LE BOULEVARD GENTILHOMME Richard Jones's so-so production, with Timothy Spall as a boorish hero. Fine wale, full comedy. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). Tonight, tomorrow, 7.30pm, 14.00pm.

CEREBAL Warm and elegant: Russian play where modern dramas encounter pre-revolutionary charm at a family drama. Orange Tree, Clarence Street, Richmond (081-940 3633). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, next Thurs, 2.30pm, Sat, 4pm, 15.00pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDENS And the search for the perfect murder: drama on the longing for revenge. Geraldine James and Paul Freeman join Michael Byrne in the best play of the year. Duke of York's, St. Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 5122). Mon-Sat, 8pm, next Thurs, 3pm, Sat, 4pm, 15.00pm.

THE FASTEST KID IN THE UNIVERSE Most eccentric black farce

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Some seats available

Seats at all prices

By Philip Ridley, with characters named Footrot, Darling and Sherbert. Gilded Entertainments. Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW1 (071-9301). Mon-Sat, 8pm, next Sat, 4pm.

HEARTBREAK HOUSE Paul Scofield and Vanessa Redgrave head Trevor Nunn's splendid cast in Shaw's 1907 comedy of English drama. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-930 8800). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, next Wed, Sat, 2.30pm, 22.25pm.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT Michael, possibly danger-worthy evocation of the joys of States and music and aspires to "top" mod music. Philip Reed's 1937 script has been rewritten for a Young Vic company on top form. Young Vic, 66 The Cut, SE1 (071-928 2252). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, next Wed, Sat, 2.30pm, 15.00pm.

THE MAN OUTSIDE Promising Expressionist drama by Wolfgang Borchert, set in Hamburg 1945 to witness the return of a soldier from the Russian front. Chelsea Centre Theatre, World's End Place, King's Road, SW10 (071-332 1867). Tue-Sat, 8pm, next Thurs, 7.30pm, Sat, 2.30pm, 15.00pm.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Theatre in the Park season reopens with revival of last year's success: new cast, new setting, new London as Bottom. Open Air Theatre, Regents Park, NW1 (071-485 2431). Mon-Sat, 8pm, next Sat, 2.30pm, 18.00pm.

PIYALAJON Alan Howard, Trevor Nunn's new production, which while others feel subordinate the text to a clever design. National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1

(071-928 2252). Today-Thurs, 7.15pm, next tomorrow, 2pm, 15.00pm.

THE KILN OF THE GALILEE Richard Griffiths and Nicola Pegg in Pegg's cardiac study of marital revenge, not as sulphurous as it could be, but still a gripping drama. Almeida, Almeida Street, N1 (071-359 4404). Mon-Sat, 8pm, next Sat, 4pm, 12.00pm.

A SUIP OF THE TONGUE A well-known John Malkovich in a light-hearted drama that seems to equate East-European

displacement with getting girls into bed. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (071-379 5399). Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, 8pm and 9pm, Sat, 4.30pm and 8.30pm, 15.00pm.

A WOMAN KILLED WITH KINDNESS Michael Malone and Saeed Rezaei in an Elizabethan domestic tragedy packed with telling details. The Play, Barbican Centre, St. St. St. EC2 (071-438 8811). Today, tomorrow, 7.30pm, 15.00pm.

LONG RUNNERS Aspects of Love: Prince of Wales (071-439 5072).

BLOOD BROTHERS Phoenix (071-467 1044).

BUDGET VICTORIA PALACE (071-434 1317).

CLUB CAESAR (071-438 7616).

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LAST week, "Take Six" was the slogan advertised for successive triple bills by the Scottish Ballet and its touring group, Scottish Ballet 2, at the Tramway. Both had good houses. Obviously the difficulty reported by ballet managements lately in selling mixed programmes of modern works is at least partly a matter of venue and marketing.

The Tramway, a former industrial building, has been simply and effectively converted for exhibition space and a theatre. The large stage makes a good area for dancing and a keen audience has been built by consistent although varied programming.

Both companies had two new works, in each case a plotless ballet and one based on Shakespeare. One of the choreographers is unknown south of the border: Amanda Miller, a member of William Forsythe's Frankfurt company. *Brief*, her second work for the Scottish Ballet, is set to a group of Bach cantatas, recorded on period instruments by Musica Antiqua in Cologne.

To this gentle music she sets a sustained web of movement for shift-

ing numbers of dancers, anything from one up to the full complement of eight. The dancers use conventional ballet steps set in a frame of ordinary walking, running or standing, almost always with some slight displacement to add a personal quality. The invention and the patterning hold the attention without needing any show-off exhibitionism: the work reveals the dancers as individuals through their control and concentration.

Scottish Ballet 2 had to push much harder with *Wild Life I*, set by Neville Campbell (formerly of Phoenix Dance) to a buzzing rock score by Rhythm Street. Apparently unfazed by having to adjust to being one man short through injury, the dancers kept their exhilarating energy going in quick relays for 15 minutes. To be fair, this

work should be compared not with *Brief*, which would make it seem shallow, but with Robert North's *Troy Games*, all fun and macho exhibitionism, which served a similar applause-raising purpose at the end of the main company's programme.

The two Shakespeare works adopt opposite approaches. Kenneth MacMillan's *Sea of Troubles* offers a shifting, allusive pattern of themes from *Hamlet* in which dancers shuffle roles repeatedly, each character played by different people. Sometimes simultaneously. The effect may be hazy, but many episodes show MacMillan at his most inventive and illuminating.

He staged it last year for the smaller group; this time the larger company presented it, although with some of the same dancers, among whom Richard

DANCE

Six of the better

Scottish Ballet
Tramway, Glasgow

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work

Variety show at the Barbican

John Russell Taylor enjoys the odd assortment of art and artefacts in an exhibition drawn from the rich collections of the Corporation of London

The art collections of old and distinguished families usually resemble a patchwork quilt, so why should one expect anything else of a city's collection? The collections of the Corporation of London, rifled for the major new show at the Barbican Art Gallery, *The Celebrated City*, have grown up in a haphazard fashion, dependant on the whim of unlikely benefactors and arbitrary bursts of purchasing, and that is precisely the image conveyed.

But then, there are more important things than consistency. Consistent collections can be immaculately boring, while arbitrariness and eccentricity frequently come up trumps. So it is here. The lower floor concentrates on paintings, while the upper is more consistently tied to the City itself, its history and its ritual objects. This means a lot of silver and gold plate, rather more remarkable for its consistency and its glitter than for seriously estimable design, and quite a number of charters and deeds and such, which will mean more to the historian than to the general observer. (Of course the City's charter from William the Conqueror, dated 1067, can still stir the imagination a little.)

Along with the documents, however, are some exquisite illuminated manuscripts and works of art which also have some arguable documentary value, however shamelessly romanticised. Frank Topham's *Rescued from the Plague*, for instance, may not be a ruthlessly accurate picture of the way things were, but on the level of *Forever Amber* it still packs a very credible punch. Nor, perhaps, can we take Philip de Loutherberg's spirited account of Old St Paul's being consumed by the Great Fire as authentic testimony, since it was not made until 1799.

Other upper-floor oddities include Frank Beresford's *A Hurricane at the Guildhall*, which commemorates an exhibition of 1943 which included the fighter plane of that name in the forecourt, and a number of rather lacklustre 20th-century depictions of state occasions, such as the Coronation Luncheon of George V and Queen Mary at the Guildhall in 1911 (Solomon J. Solomon) and the presentation of the Freedom of the City to HRH Princess Elizabeth in 1947 (William Dring).

Downstairs it is all for art. This means in practice two major gift/bequest, completely unrelated to each other or

'Consistent collections can be boring, but arbitrariness and eccentricity often appeal'

anything else around, and the fruits of the Corporation's great bout of acquisition, by various means, in the late 19th-early 20th centuries to furnish the Guildhall Gallery with a collection of modern art worthy of the greatest city in the British Empire.

The first bequest encountered is the most recent, the Harold Samuel Collection left by Lord Samuel of Wych Cross in 1987. This, though described by one London art dealer as "the greatest art bequest this century", will, for many visitors, come under the general heading of consistent but dull, and so the Barbican Gallery seems to think, to judge by the way the 83 17th-century Dutch paintings have been stacked on the walls.

Admittedly spirits are lifted by an occasional highlight. The most famous and presumably valuable picture in the whole bequest is the Frans

Hals *Merry Lute Player*, though even that, for all its merriness, is predominately brown. The de Hooch *Interior with Woman Knitting* is more cheerfully coloured, and stands out from its crowded context as few others do: though the names are sometimes impressive, the works by the Bruegel/Brueghels, Teniers the Younger, Albert Cuyp and others need to be much more individually showcased in order to emerge from this universal brown show.

If the tonality of this bequest is predominantly dark, the Matthew Smith gift goes to the other extreme. A collection of works left in Smith's studio was given to the Corporation by his daughter, possibly in the hope that they might be given a permanent exhibition space of their own. A changing selection is generally on show on the upper floor here.

For the present show they have been moved down, and carefully selected to leave only the best visible. The result is that visitors are engulfed by an almost tropical wave of colour: flowers, fruit and the capacious form of one of Smith's favourite models, the painter Vera Cunningham.

In between Dutch gloom and Post-Impressionist glimmer comes the Victorian collection. Though it has not been exhibited as a whole since the bombing of the Guildhall Gallery, generous selections have appeared intermittently in the interim. Those chosen this time include Edward J. Poynter's *DeMille's Israel in Egypt*, still in real terms possibly the highest-priced painting ever sold off the easel, and Edward Armitage's similarly proto-dramatic *Herod's Birthday Feast*, the subject of which is presumably Salome's Dance (featuring a very hefty and dusky Salome), even if the artist is too delicate to tell us.

There are also several more paintings like *Rescued from the Plague*, designed to im-



Exquisite gift: *The Music Lesson* by Frederick Leighton was presented to the Corporation of London in 1925

press upon youthful minds an acceptable version of 1066 and *All That*; notably W.S. Burton's *The Wounded Cavalier* (wrong but romantic/right but repulsive) and Richard Burchett's spirited *King Edward IV Pursuing Lancastrian Fugitives in a Church*, demonstrating what beasts those Yorkists were when they really got started.

Happily there is a sufficiency of seriously good works as well, including the cream of the City's Pre-Raphaelites —

though a few years ago they too would have been tarred with the same brush as the potted history. Now, however, Millais's *The Woodman's Daughter*, despite the girl's rather evidently rethought and repainted head, looks like one of the finest of those early PRB works in which every blade of grass was painted with the same nighmarish and unnatural precision, all in the cause of naturalism.

Rossetti's *La Ghirlandata* is a different matter, too late

to be regarded as Pre-Raphaelite in that sense at all, but a masterpiece of dreamy voluptuousness. One of the most truly Pre-Raphaelite works is not by a member of the Brotherhood at all, but that does not disqualify the Scot William Dyce's meticulous *George Herbert at Bemerton* from being one of the most memorable pictures on show.

The rest of this indeterminate area between Hals and Smith extends the mixed bag

of gifts and even, very occasionally, purchases. Someone gave Leighton's exquisite *The Music Lesson* as late as 1925, when it can hardly have seemed any big deal. Unpredictability is the collection's strong suit, and that is all quite as it should be.

● *The Celebrated City*, Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre, London EC2 (071-588 9023) Mon.-Wed-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Tues 10am-5.45pm, Sun noon-7.45pm, until July 19. Admission £4, concessions £2.

ARTS BRIEF

Cutting Carver

RIDING high after the success of his film *The Player* (due to open in London in July), the director Robert Altman has now announced an ambitious new project which recalls the teeming canyons of *Nashville*. *Short Cuts* will feature 28 major characters in blue-collar Los Angeles, whose lives, Altman says, "criss-cross and touch each other and sometimes don't". The film is based on Raymond Carver's short stories.

Copland premiere

BALLET music by the late Aaron Copland, composed in 1925 but never performed, will be played at the Aldeburgh Festival this month by the London Sinfonietta under Oliver Knussen, who traced the score to the Library of Congress in Washington DC. Titled *Grohg*, and much influenced by the German expressionist film, *Nosferatu*, the ballet was planned to include a magician-vampire, dead bodies that dance, an opium-eater and assorted on-stage coffins. It was composed while Copland was studying in Paris in the hope of getting Diaghilev's interest, and he always nursed a wistful regret that it never reached the stage. *Grohg* will have its first performance at The Maltings, Aldeburgh on June 20.

Last chance...

VIKTOR SLAVKIN'S *Cercieu* won Moscow Best Play Award in 1985 before the words perestroika and glasnost entered common parlance, yet it boldly suggested the charms of Tsarist Russia. A group of 1980s forty-something friends visit the dacha that one of them has inherited and discover, among other things, the pre-revolutionary game *cercieu*, which is something like quots or horseshoes. The play is elegiac, sometimes leisurely but the acting in Adrian Brine's production at the Orange Tree, Richmond (081-940 3633), is spot on and vibrant with nuances that now make 1985 seem almost as remote as 1917. Final performance is on Saturday.

RADIO REVIEW

Brushing up your Spanish sweeps all else aside

If this isn't too much trouble, I wonder if it might be at all possible to ensure that the Olympic Games and the World Fair are never given to the same country, in the same year, again. This can hardly have escaped your attention, but for those who have been locked in the lavatory for the past six months, both Expo 92 and the Olympics are taking place in Spain this year, and radio is taking the whole thing so seriously that I am beginning to speak with a "th".

Please do not think me Hispanophobic — some of my best sunstrokes have been Spanish — but I cannot wait for an entire day to pass on Radio 3 without being told about ancient courtship rituals in "Thiveyur", or the culinary idiosyncrasies of five people living in a particular street in the top left-hand corner of "Barthelona".

This has not been possible since this column last appeared because we have been living in what Radio 3 decreed should be Andalusia Week, and the trouble with Weeks is that they take seven days, to get through. Even by Radio 3's standards this has meant scraping barrels hidden from sight for generations — for example, how much do you need to know about *The Legacy of Gerald Brenan* (Friday), in which *Third Ear* in Andalusia invited his biographer, Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, to analyse the author's reputation?

And forgive me for forgetting the day and the programme title, but I could swear I heard something about the Manuel de Falla museum, a fascinating place which has thousands of the composer's letters, a few signed manuscripts, and a curator who speaks English about as well as most people speak Tibetan. De Falla's music is worth listening to, the details of his handwriting are not.

In the course of the week (and a couple more before) Radio 3 has not only examined every minute detail of Spanish life and culture like a forensic scientist looking for a stray hair on Hampstead Heath, but I feel I have been introduced to every Spanish singer, dancer, short-order waitress and bullfight expert

across the Iberian peninsula.

You want to know about the influence of the Moors on Andalusian breadmaking, or what it was like to be Jewish in medieval Spain, or which BBC arts journalist speaks the fonciest Spanish? Ask me — at this moment I know more about the place than you could use in a thousand fortnights in Benidorm. Not, come to think of it, that you need to know much about Spain for a fortnight in Benidorm.

Spain is a country of infinite texture and cultural variety, but one programme could have told us that — all right, two or three. Nor would I have resisted a programme bringing me up to speed with Spanish politics, or another devoted to the undeniable genius of Manuel Garcia Lorca.

To be fair, Radio 3 provided both, and two Sundays ago it also broadcast Ranjit Boli's fine new translation of *The Real Don Juan*, written in 1844 by José Zorrilla y Moral. Those things and some very good music apart, the rest should have been, but was not, silence.

Easily the best music programme of the week had nothing to do with the pyrotechnical thrill of the Spanish guitar but the deceptively simple English beauty of Ralph Vaughan Williams's most serene masterpiece, *The Lark Ascending*. In Radio 4's *Kaleidoscope Special* — always worth a Friday night visit — the violinist Iona Brown described how hard it is to play. Sir Neville Marriner described what a nightmare it is to conduct, and an ornithologist described what a lark does when it ascends, perfectly illustrating how close to the real thing Vaughan Williams got.

Best of all, though, was the composer's widow, Ursula. Her husband, she explained breezily, was good at growing green beans but absolutely rotten about anything else to do with the countryside.

"It was some place he visited at weekends," she said. "I don't think he could have spotted a lark if he saw one." Somehow this knowledge made his sublime music all the more endearing.

PATRICK STODDART

FESTIVAL: WORLD OF MUSIC, ARTS AND DANCE

Getting wise to the world in Morecambe

At Womad 1992, David Toop finds musicians and performers from many countries defying the weather and bringing Third World sunshine to a Lancashire seaside resort

My last brush with entertainment in the north-west came in the form of Bobby Crush, performing his relentlessly happy piano instrumentals at the end of a Blackpool pier. How times do change. Morecambe Bay has grown so proud of hosting the annual Womad festival of world music that the event is trumpeted as a major attraction, a "colourful extravaganza" no less, in the tourist brochures.

Thus, Morecambe is transformed for a few days each year. A classic northern seaside resort — slate-grey sea, hotels with Scottish names — sees the convergence of all the phenomena we have come to associate with the World of Music, Arts and Dance. Once again, we could stock up on juggling equipment and hash pipes. Reassuringly polyglot, perhaps a little older than before, the audience ranged from terminal bedraggled to spectacular ecstasies.

Food and music carried the symbolic message of the festival in their global diversity and aura of good health. Not all of either the food or the music were good, of course, but from the unfamiliar juxtapositions came a sense that the world is changing in ways which none of us yet comprehend.

Sartorially, the dissonances between Womad performers can be alarming. Zimbabwe's Black Umfolosi danced in grass skirts and gunboats; while they stomped and chanted in the big top, the Five Blind Boys of Alabama were led on to another stage wearing double-breasted yellow ochre suits and white shirts.

This inspirational gospel group has been singing for the Lord since the early Forties. Being blind, their leader, Clarence Fountain, was unable to savour the full strangeness of performing in a yellow brick railway station. The stage had been erected in close proximity to the carefully preserved gentlemen's lavatory, but Clarence seemed earthy enough to cope with any environment. "Chickens die that we might live," he began, praising the

carriers, but then turned to praising God.

The group's repertoire is resolutely old-fashioned. At its most modern in songs such as "I've Been Born Again", southern soul of the early Seventies, the set list was built around gospel standards, of which "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord" and "Deep River" were typical. "We don't need dope if we got hope" might have been expected to fall on fallow ground in such a gathering yet, again, gritty southern testifying bridged the gulf between faith and liberal pluralism.

Another type of faith was on view in the big top. Matching the intensity of his songs with a Malcolm X T-shirt and the black hat of a voodoo priest, Winston Rodney (better known as Burning Spear) was re-living the heady days of roots reggae from the mid-Seventies.

Fashion cast Burning Spear adrift during the Eighties, but

in the political context of the present, subjects such as black nationalism and Marcus Garvey have accrued a sombre new significance. Aspects of the militant and spiritual rastafarian lifestyle must stand as an ideal to many Womad followers, and Spear's uplifting music was ecstatically received.

Saturday's highlights included high-spirited Latin music from Colombia and the eagerly anticipated Super Rail Band of Bamako. Despite the excitement generated by both bands, less British rain and more of the heat which has affected other parts of the country recently might have created a better setting.

A succession of star vocalists has passed through the ranks of Mali's Super Rail Band: if the current singers did not sound destined for stardom, the guitar lines still tumbled like waterfalls across complex rhythms.

Spectacular performances

draw the crowds, yet it was Sheila Chandra's informal lecture on singing and drones which left a stronger impression on me. Chandra began her career as a pop singer in 1981, singing "Ever So Lonely" with a band named Monsoon. Since then, she has evolved a fascinating, unique approach to the solo voice.

Now she inter-weaves North Indian classical singing with Irish and English folk songs and plainchant. Demonstrating links between musics which use either overt or

implicit drones, she skilfully used the untrained voices of her audience to create a mesmerizing mood.

Speaking to her afterwards, I asked how she was able to link the two very different traditions of English folk and Indian classical music. "I have a sense of rebelliousness about putting things into categories," she answered. "I don't like to be tied to one theory." That, in a nutshell, is Womad.

Meanwhile, back in the holiday zone of Morecambe's promenade, the bingo callers droned their numerical mantras, arcade games bleeped and pub DJs played "The Birdie Song". Life goes on.



The Super Rail Band of Bamako, Mali: singers come and go, but the group's guitar lines tumble like waterfalls

Verdi Falstaff

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ENO

It is bad enough having small children, but when they grow up your problems really start, says Virginia Ironside

No, please don't grow up

Being a parent is for life. I remember my ante-natal teacher telling me this with a smug smile as I breathed my way through her classes. But, like most other mothers, I thought she was exaggerating. Only, surely, until the child was adult would I bear the care and anxiety. At some magic age — somewhere between 18 and 21 — this child would become an adult and I'd be free.

But, as Stephanie Calman recently pointed out, neither child nor parent ever gets away. Mature, charming, balding chaps in suits who run successful large companies often get fits of the sulks and fets when with their ageing mothers. Menopausal daughters may get infuriated if a parent so much as asks them if they're warm enough.

When I innocently asked a counsellor why my anxiety about my son had increased rather than decreased when he reached 18, she roared with laughter. Her face bore traces of the same sort of smug hilarity as my ante-natal teacher.

"Your troubles are only just beginning," she said. "It is much, much more difficult to be the parent of an adult than a child."

I realise that already. Control has gone out of the window. Requests like "Tidy your room!" "Be back at midnight!" are not only completely unreasonable when barked at an adult, they're also unenforceable.

When my son was five, I could arrive at a children's party, insist on him leaving at once and drag him, screaming, away. Now he's 18 I can't do the same at one in the morning outside a disco in Camden. And anyway, he's got the car.

When children are young, you don't have to stand back and watch them make the same mistakes as you did. If they do, the solution is simple. Just tell them not to. Or no. No pocket money.

But when you see your 25-year-old daughter falling for an unsuitable roué — just like the one you fell

for at the same age — such threats will not work. And as a parent, you feel pain from all sides. Pain at remembering what a chump you were when you went through the same agonies, pain at seeing your daughter suffering, pain of trying to keep your mouth buttoned up knowing that saying anything would only make matters worse.

And while a child is young, a parent can witness with her own eyes how sensible it is. Once a small child looks left, right, and left again, a parent knows it's learnt its lesson about crossing roads.

It is more difficult to be the parent of an adult than a child

But foresight and good sense is much less easy to measure. An adult child with a family may be stuffing money into pension funds, taking the children for regular medical check-ups — but the grandparents are not around to witness it. It is not that they assume their children are by nature feckless, incapable of insuring themselves when going on holiday or driving without drinking. They just do not have quite enough evidence to know otherwise. And, as parents know, better safe than sorry.

Whenever I go on holiday, the number of notes I leave my son are a standing joke. The stairs are littered with reminders to keep the shutters shut at night, feed the cats, not to double park the car outside in case it is towed away, to remember the shops are shut on bank holiday. On the landings are lists — the telephone number of the vet, of our hotel, of the doctor. Yellow stickers on doors warn him not to leave the house without putting the answering machine on. Others below information about the burglar alarm and who owns the spare keys.

Last time he said, sighing: "You've forgotten something, mum." "What?" I asked. "Not to take sweets from strangers," he said. Then he kindly put his arm around me and led me to a chair as if I were suffering from senile dementia. "Mum — do you really think I'm a complete berk?"



Sense and sensitivities: Virginia Ironside may know her son Will Grove-White is completely sensible, but she still leaves him notes

This was a good question. Do I? No, I think he's incredibly sensible. And as I write him these notes I myself know they're barmy. It is as if they're written by some other, hormonal, self. I still, mother-hen-like, want to protect him from harm, not just from outside but from his own lack of experience.

Of course, there is an element of superstition about these worries, too. If I worry about them they won't

happen. And also they cover me. If the house were broken into and I hadn't reminded him about double-locking the door at night, I would never forgive myself.

A parent's concern never seems to die away, however old she gets. As an agony columnist I get hundreds of letters from elderly parents, sick with worry about their sons' divorces, their daughters' unhappiness, the way their grandchildren

are being brought up. My ante-natal teacher was right. You never stop being a parent. Only last week, a middle-aged friend was bailed out of financial ruin by his father, who organised the transaction with infinite tact, saying that it was nothing, that he would get all the money in the end anyway, so why not now.

Many more of us now, in middle age, have both elderly parents and

adult children. We can understand why our ancient parents fuss, because we feel the same about our children. But surely the life of a child, whatever age, loved to distraction, fussed over, is an easier one than the life of a parent, constantly anxious, constantly walking on eggs trying to help their children and keep them from harm, as discreetly as possible. For ever.

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Is it child's play?



DAVINA LLOYD

You can see why chaps like it. It whisks them back to boyhood, lets them indulge a pastoral dream of fair play, companionship and strong ale. For urban man, village cricket offers a slice of the might-have-been — and of course, it beats the socks off grouting bathroom tiles.

Take the Journeymen, for instance, a motley crew of teachers, journalists, solicitors and social workers. Having no ground of their own, they share the municipal pitches of the metropolis in favour of far-flung fixtures against the Oxford Downs Strollers or the gentlemen of Hemmock in Devon.

I joined the Journeymen for their annual tour of Norfolk, a half-term treat for the children to see their father a hero away from home. The average age of the team being 40.4 (a sight higher than their individual batting averages), many have young children. And most of them believed that the tour would be a splendid occasion for everyone. But if you ask "Howzat?" for the women and children accompanying the Journeymen, they may see it differently. For how can a cricket match be a family day, when all the men are separated from their kin and fenced

From a child's perspective, father is a distant speck on the horizon

in by a boundary line that resembles nothing so much as a huge invisible playpen?

From a child's perspective, father is a distant speck on the horizon. More than once, my children and I have cheered the achievements of someone quite other than their father who happened to have a similar floppy hat. The game is a mystery to most children. "Why is daddy sitting down all the time?" "If he's wicketkeeper does he get to keep them at the end of the game?" The wives must not only answer these questions, but keep the children away from the evil-bladed mower and roller, interested in the game, ready to clap a six on cue and willing to fib: "Yes, dad, we saw your catch".

When the second innings starts, it is now time for fathers to take over the responsibility for the children? Not quite because two dads are batting, two have turned into umpires, two are padding up, two scoring, two are discussing how to poach the Fakenham Barons wicketkeeper for the next game, and the other chap is searching for the beer.

Other games develop around the boundary. A couple of boys silently pray for a major but non-fatal injury to befall one of the fathers so that they will be invited to save the day. A one-year old toddles up to the scoreboard and has fun hanging the tin numerals on entirely different pegs.

The rest of the children are having a wonderful time. Townies let loose in ragged meadows, they race and ram-page, chucking frisbees at each other while the mothers try to prevent their games from spilling on to the pitch. As the sun sinks down in the wide Norfolk sky, stumps are finally drawn and we can all look forward to the ritual assembly in the village pub. The men are keen to get to the East Anglian ales. The mothers hope it is one of the pubs that will allow them and the children into the snug and not just the car park.

What else can cricket wives do? Stay at home? Do something else? Some do — they sneak away to go riding, sketch, doze off on their cars. Two saintly mothers organised an expedition to the nearby Castle Rising, taking a crocodile of children with them. I suppose we could even watch the cricket.

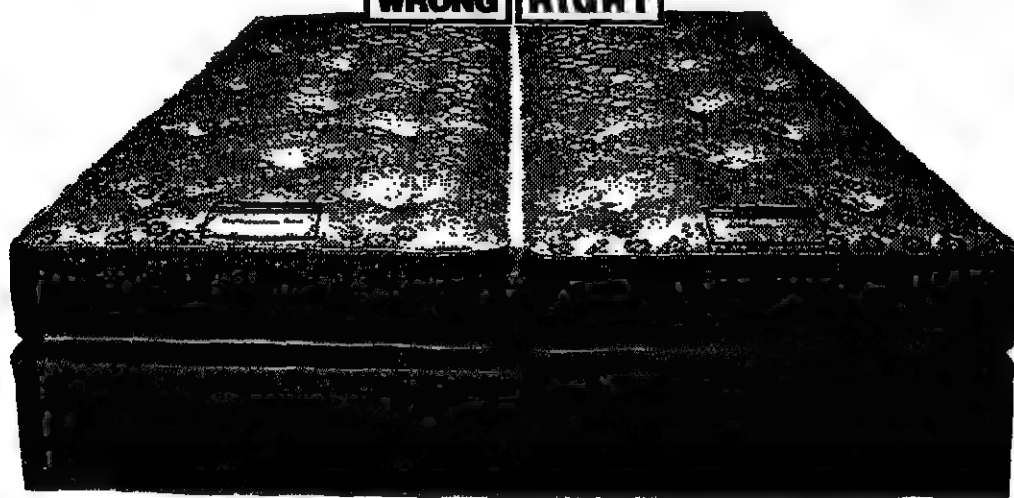
Davina Lloyd is the editor of Practical Parenting magazine

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Exams are pure hell. Discuss

Is your home like a training ground in a psychological warfare, with a neurosis quotient that goes well over the danger level? Is physical and mental violence a permanent factor of everyday life? Do you long for your sons, daughters or possibly yourself, to be taken into care? If so, your children are, like ours, in the throes of exam fever.

I blame the examination system. It tests the wrong subjects. It should be measuring what the kids are naturally good at. Such as this:

1. Candidates should explain why it is: (a) too hot; (b) too cold; (c) too close; (d) too close to supper time to get down to revising for an examination they are sitting the next day.

2. You are faced tomorrow with a written test in a subject which has always left you baffled. Explain which of the following options is the least useful in a last-minute attempt to scrape a pass: (a) lying on the floor watching *Def 11*; (b) sitting at your desk reading *Smash Hits*; (c) compiling a list of all the second division football players you can remember whose names begin with "M" — and why you chose it.

3. Which of the following remarks would you choose in order to make an already stretched parent finally crack? (a) "We were taught all that last term so I don't need to look at it again." (b) "We weren't taught properly so there's no point in trying to pick it up now." (c) "That bit of the syllabus hasn't come up in an exam for five years so they'll give it a miss this year too." (d) "That bit of the syllabus has come up in every exam over the last five years so it won't come up this time." (e) "Can you take a personal stereo into the exam as I don't want to miss Davis Lee Travis lunchtime chill-out?"

4. At 2pm a candidate heads up the garden to "work". Given the time taken to go back for a glass of orange juice, a text book, a radio, a

Questions that all parents want their children to answer

pair of sunglasses, a rug and another glass of orange juice, what is the earliest time by which the first piece of information is committed to memory? (a) 5pm; (b) 7.30pm; (c) too late anyway — the exam was at 9am that morning.

5. There is a 60 per cent probability that a candidate

will have forgotten the time of the next paper, and a 70 per cent probability that he will be somewhat hazy about the subject it is in. He wishes to telephone a friend for these details; there is a 17 per cent chance that each of his four brothers and sisters will be ahead of him in the queue for the phone, and that his friend's family is equally likely to be hogging their own line with similar last-minute queries. What are the odds against the candidate achieving a 100 per cent mark in the paper in question?

6. "Winston Churchill/Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine/the manager of the local Odeon never passed an examination in his life and look where he got — so there's no point in me wasting the best years of my life in a stuffy exam room." (a) Discuss, but to be heard by parents and teachers; or, (b) Write an essay illustrating the contention that "It's okay — I can always take it again next year."

7. A candidate tells another candidate that if you take these little green tablets, your mem-

ory powers increase phenomenally. How many do both have to take before: (a) their powers of memory decrease phenomenally; (b) the first candidate becomes sufficiently spaced-out to start climbing up the wall of the examination room?; (c) the second candidate writes the answers on the clock and tries to hand them in?

8. At 11.30 on a Sunday night a candidate has completed his revision for a science paper commencing at 9am on the following Monday. (a) With diagrams, describe the shock to the nervous system received when he suddenly realises that he has forgotten all about the German paper which starts at 2.30 on Monday afternoon; (b) Use your knowledge of the psychology of panic attacks to describe the effect on the candidate of the subsequent realisation that he also has to revise for the maths exam on Tuesday morning, and history during the afternoon.

9. Three candidates between them manage one hour's revision on Monday night, 50 minutes on Tuesday, 40 on Wednesday. Draw a graph to indicate: (a) the point at which they are actually doing minus revision; (b) the point at which their parents lock them in their room with their textbooks and install closed-circuit television to check they are working.

Candidates should complete this examination in the same way that they began, i.e. whenever they feel like it. Marks will be deducted for legible handwriting, as the examiners are trained graphologists and enjoy grappling with unreadable scrawls. Candidates may confer, and are permitted to delegate another person or persons to sit the exam in their place. No criticism is incurred by candidates who fail, but they may be asked to leave home, possibly for good.

JONATHAN SALE

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Hotels: Southern region

ALBI
ALTEA BASTIDES

41 Rue Porta, 81000 Albi.
GRID REFERENCE: E9.
Modern convenience in an antique mill on the Tarn river, facing the St-Cécile cathedral. 56 rooms.
Restaurant Le Moulin: noon to 2pm and 7.30pm to 10.30pm.
Bar. Room service. Parking. No family rooms. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Albi Sequestre (2.2km).
Station: Albi Ville (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 340Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 555Ffr (50% discount).

ALES
MERCURE ALES CEVENNES

18 Rue Edgard, Quintet, 30100 Ales.
GRID REFERENCE: H8.
A short distance from the commercial centre, this hotel is an ideal stop-over between the Ardèche, the Cévennes and the Camargue. 75 rooms.
Restaurant L'Esplanade: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm.
Golf. Tennis. Room service. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family rooms available.
Airport: Nîmes Giron (50km).
Station: Ales (750m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 270Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 360Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 410Ffr (50% discount).

MECURE BORDEAUX AEROPORT

1 Avenue Charles Lindbergh, 33700 Mérignac.
GRID REFERENCE: D8.
This modern hotel, 500m from the airport, benefits from sound-proofing and some splendid facilities. 105 rooms.
Restaurant Le Mercure: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Swimming pool. Parking. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Bordeaux Mérignac (500m).
Station: St-Jean (12km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 295Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 550Ffr (50% discount).

BIARRITZ
MERCURE BAYONNE BIARRITZ

Avenue Jean Rostand, 64100 Bayonne.
GRID REFERENCE: C9.
Splendid modern, comfortable hotel some 5km from the ocean and close to the Spanish border. 109 rooms.
Restaurant L'Agara: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family rooms available.
Airport: Biarritz Bayonne (5km).
Station: Bayonne (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.

GRENOBLE
MERCURE GRENOBLE ALPEXPO

1 Avenue D'Iansbruck, 38100 Grenoble.
GRID REFERENCE: I7.
The perfect touring base from which to explore the town and region. 100 rooms. 100 rooms. Airport: Lyon Satolas (25km). Station: Perrache (10km). La Part Dieu (10km). Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 360Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 415Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE GRENOBLE ALPOTEL CENTRE

12 Bd Marechal Joffre, BP 274 - 38008, Grenoble.
GRID REFERENCE: I7.
A hotel of refined simplicity just a short walk from the lively town centre and Park Mistral park. 88 rooms.
Restaurant Le Magnolia: noon to 2.30pm and 5pm to 11pm. Bar. Satellite TV. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Grenoble St-Georges (36km).
Station: Lyon Satolas (90km).

LANCON DE PROVENCE
MERCURE LANCON DE PROVENCE

Autoroute A7, 13680 Lancon de Provence.
GRID REFERENCE: H9.
Splendid stop-over hotel facing delightful olive groves. 100 rooms.
Restaurant L'Olivier: noon to 2.30pm and 5pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Satellite TV. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Marseille Provence (25km).
Station: Marseilles St-Charles (40km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 300Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 450Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500Ffr (50% discount).

MARSEILLE
MERCURE MARSEILLE CENTRE

Boulevard Candi-Salé, 64000 Pau.
GRID REFERENCE: D9.
A modern hotel close to the Spanish border and 500m from the sports stadium. Excellent value stop-over hotel. 92 rooms.
Restaurant Ciel Cour: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Bar. Satellite TV. Swimming pool. Room service. Parking. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Pau-Pyrénées (5km).
Station: Pau (6km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 435Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 560Ffr (50% discount).

MECURE NIMES OUEST

Rue Tony Garnier - Ville Active, 30900 Nîmes.
GRID REFERENCE: H9.
Excellent choice for a family stop-over just off Autoroute 9 but only 2km from the town centre.
Restaurant Le Mazet: noon to 2.30pm and 5.30pm to 11pm. Bar. Parking. Swimming pool and garden. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nîmes-Arles-Camargue (12km).
Station: Nîmes (500m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 590Ffr (50% discount).

PAU
MERCURE PAU PALAIS DES SPORTS

Boulevard Candi-Salé, 64000 Pau.
GRID REFERENCE: D9.
A modern hotel close to the Spanish border and 500m from the sports stadium. Excellent value stop-over hotel. 92 rooms.
Restaurant Ciel Cour: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Bar. Satellite TV. Swimming pool. Room service. Parking. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Pau-Pyrénées (5km).
Station: Pau (6km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 435Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 560Ffr (50% discount).

PERPIGNAN
PERPIGNAN CENTRE

5 Bis Cours Palmaré, 66000 Perpignan.
GRID REFERENCE: G10.
In the heart of the town, only a stone's throw from Caselles and La Pique de la Loge, a modern and pleasant hotel. Beaches are 9km away. 60 rooms.
Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Five-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Perpignan Rivésaltes (6km).
Station: Perpignan (1.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 300Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 400Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 425Ffr (50% discount).

ST-LARY
ALTEA CRISTAL PARC

Rue de Soulan B.P. 20, 65170 St-Lary-Soulan.
GRID REFERENCE: D9.
In the heart of the Pyrenees.
69 Avenue Jean Jaures / 1 Avenue Docteur P Durand, 26600 Tain L'Hermitage.
GRID REFERENCE: G8.
On the banks of the Rhône, at the foot of the vineyards, near tennis courts, a quiet family-style hotel for a wine-tasting visit featuring gourmet dishes. 48 rooms.
Restaurant Le Pressoir: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Room service. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Toulouse-Matabiau (10km).
Station: Toulouse (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 510Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 540Ffr (50% discount).

MONTPELLIER
MERCURE MONTPELLIER

Avenue Jean Mermoz-Antigone, 34000 Montpellier.
GRID REFERENCE: G9.
Close to Montpellier beaches, this is a splendid modern hotel near to the historic city centre. 114 rooms.
Restaurant Le Mercure: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Montpellier-Méditerranée (10km).
Station: Montpellier (25km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 620Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 715Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 820Ffr (50% discount).

LYON
MERCURE LYON SUD CHASSE

Centre Commercial, 38670 Chasse Sur Rhone.
GRID REFERENCE: H7.
Ideal stop-over hotel en route to Côte d'Azur. Near to Autoroute 7 about 20km from Lyon. 115 rooms.
Restaurant Les Murières: noon to 2.30pm and 5pm to 11pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Lyon Satolas (25km).
Station: Chasse Sur Rhone (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 295Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 410Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 475Ffr (50% discount).

NIMES
MERCURE NIMES LA BAUME

21 Rue Nationale, 30000 Nîmes.
GRID REFERENCE: H9.
A charming hotel built around a magnificent 17th century staircase. At the centre of historic Nîmes close to the famous monument, the Maison Carrée and Pont Auguste. 33 rooms. Light meals only. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family rooms available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nîmes-Arles-Camargue (12km).
Station: Nîmes (500m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 590Ffr (50% discount).

TOULOUSE
ALTEA TOULOUSE LES CAPITULES

29, Allée Jean-Jaures, 31000 Toulouse.
GRID REFERENCE: E9.
In a beautiful building located in the heart of the pink city, the hotel is perfectly located for business and tourist travellers. 52 rooms.
Bar. Satellite TV. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Toulouse-Matabiau (8km).
Station: Matabiau (800m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 425Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 565Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 655Ffr (50% discount).

TOULOUSE
ALTEA TOULOUSE MATABIAU

Boulevard Pierre Sémard-Gare SNCF Matabiau, 31000 Toulouse.
GRID REFERENCE: E9.
In a wing of the Matabiau railway station landmark building, on the banks of the Canal du Midi. 62 rooms.
Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Toulouse-Matabiau (9km).
Station: Matabiau (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 390Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 550Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 640Ffr (50% discount).

TOULOUSE
MERCURE TOULOUSE ST-GEORGES

Rue St-Jerome, 31000 Toulouse.
GRID REFERENCE: E9.
First-class business centre hotel. Famous in the area for the culinary tradition of its restaurant. 170 rooms.
Restaurant Le Petit Jardin: noon to 10.30pm. Bar. Satellite TV. Room service. Public parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Toulouse-Matabiau (8km).
Station: Matabiau (800m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 425Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 525Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 650Ffr (50% discount).

TOULOUSE
ALTEA TOULOUSE WILSON

7 Rue Labeda (Angle Place Wilson), 31000 Toulouse.
GRID REFERENCE: E9.
Ideally situated in the heart of the town, close to the Capitole. 92 rooms.
Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Toulouse-Matabiau (10km).
Station: Matabiau (1km).
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Restaurant Le Petit Jardin: noon to 10.30pm. Bar. Satellite TV. Room service. Public parking. Four-bed family

Hotels: Northern region

ANGERS

MERCURE ANGERS CENTRE

1 Place Mendes France, 49100 Angers.
GRID REFERENCE: D5.
Nestling against the town's ornamental gardens, this hotel is bathed in calm. Savour vintage wines at nearby vineyards. 86 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Saisons: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf nearby.
Tennis. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (90km).
Station: Angers-St-Laud TGV (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 540Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA LAC DE MAINE

Route de Nantes, 49000 Angers.
GRID REFERENCE: D5.
Surrounded by greenery, on the outskirts of Angers, this hotel is located five minutes by car from the town centre via the expressway. 79 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Diffen: noon to 2pm and 7.15 to 10pm. Fitness room. Golf nearby.
Tennis. Bar. Room service. Light meals. Satellite TV. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (90km).
Station: Angers (3.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 325 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 430 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 490 Ffr (50% discount).

ANGOULEME

ALTEA HOTEL DE FRANCE

1 Place des Halles, 16000 Angoulême.
GRID REFERENCE: D7.
Set in the heart of the city, in gardens overlooking the ramparts, opposite the central market and next to the pedestrian mall. 90 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Jardins des Arceaux: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf nearby. Tennis. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Angoulême (8km).
Station: Angoulême TGV (60km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500 Ffr (50% discount).

ARRAS

MERCURE ATRIA

Boulevard Carnot, 62000 Arras.
GRID REFERENCE: F2.
In the town centre, near the TGV train station, a new hotel combining comfort with functionality. Perfect for

Stopovers and touring. 80 rooms.

Restaurant: Le Mercure: noon to 3pm and 7pm to 11pm. Satellite TV. Golf nearby. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Lille-Lesquin (45km).
Station: Gare TGV Arras.
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 430Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500Ffr (50% discount).

AUXERRE

MERCURE AUXERRE NORD

CD 319 - RN6, 89380 Appoigny.
GRID REFERENCE: G4.
Midway between Paris and Reims, 7km from Auxerre's town centre and 20 km from the Chablis vineyards, a hotel set in a park. 82 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Chaumois: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to midnight. Golf nearby.
Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Orly (135km).
Station: Auxerre (8km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 420Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 450Ffr (50% discount).

BEAUNE

ALTEA RELAIS DE BEAUNE

Boite Postale 145, 21204 Beaune.
GRID REFERENCE: H5.
A quiet hotel in the middle of a wooded park. Easy access by Autoroute 6 or by department road No 18. 150 rooms.
Restaurant: La Bourgogne: 11.30am to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10pm. Golf nearby. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Dijon Bourgogne (40km).
Stations: Beaune (12km); Chalon-sur-Saône (20km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 410Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 440Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA HOTEL DE BOURGOGNE

Avenue de Général De Gaulle BP 292, 21203 Beaune.
GRID REFERENCE: H5.
Located in the town centre, 600m from the intersection of Autoroutes A6, A36 and A37. 120 rooms.
Restaurant: La Calèche: noon to 2pm and 7.15pm to 9.30pm. Tennis. Golf nearby. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Dijon Bourgogne (40km).
Station: Beaune (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 410Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 450Ffr (50% discount).

BEAUVAIS

MERCURE ST LAZARE

Avenue Montaigne - Zac St Lazare, 60000 Beauvais.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
Outside the town centre, a hotel uniting both utility and grace in a town dominated by the splendid gothic cathedral of St-Pierre. 60 rooms.
Restaurant: Grill Le Challenger: 7pm to 10.30pm (Monday to Thursday).
Swimming pool. Bar. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Roissy C.D.G. (60km).
Station: Beauvais (3km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 280Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 322Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 460Ffr (50% discount).

BELFORT

MERCURE DANJOUTIN

Rue du Docteur Jacquet, 90400 Danjoutin.
GRID REFERENCE: T4.
Located between the Alsace and the Doubs, a fully-renovated hotel, with a park and a swimming pool. 80 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Ombres: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Golf nearby. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Mulhouse Bâle (70km).
Station: Belfort (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 320Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 460Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 535 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA HOTEL DU LION

2 Rue Georges Clemenceau, 90000 Belfort.
GRID REFERENCE: T4.
Located in the heart of the historic city of Belfort, very close to the railway station. Ideal for business or tourism. 82 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Saisons: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Bar. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Bâle-Mulhouse (50km).
Station: Belfort (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 320 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 460 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 535 Ffr (50% discount).

BESANCON

MERCURE BESANCON CENTRE

4 Avenue Carnot, 25000 Besançon.
GRID REFERENCE: I5.
In the heart of a town renowned for its watches, a remarkable, perfectly renovated, turn-of-the-century hotel, once a hot springs resort with a park. 67 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Bains: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf nearby. Tennis. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Bâle-Mulhouse (150km).
Station: Besançon Viotte (1.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 320Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 420/470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 480/520Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA HOTEL PARC MICAUD

3 Avenue Edouard Droc, 25000 Besançon.
GRID REFERENCE: I5.
Set on a superb site beside the Doubs, the hotel is also near the heart of the city. 95 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Vesontio: noon to 2pm and 7pm to midnight. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Bâle-Mulhouse (150km).
Station: Besançon Viotte (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 320Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 490/430Ffr (Bath/Showers) (50% discount).
Red: 550/490Ffr (Bath/Showers) (50% discount).

BREST

ALTEA HOTEL CONTINENTAL

Square de la Tour D'Auvergne, 22 Rue de Lyon, 29200 Brest.
GRID REFERENCE: A3.
In the heart of Brest, near the railway station and harbour. 75 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Conti: 7.30pm to 11pm. Golf nearby. Bar. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Brest-Guipavas (10km).
Station: Gare TGV (50km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not applicable.

CHARLEVILLE-MEZIERES

MERCURE VILLES-SEMEUSE

Rue Louise Michel, 08000 Villes-Semeuse.
GRID REFERENCE: H2.
The native town of the poet Rimbaud — and also the world's marionette capital (thus suggesting the restaurant's motif) this is a modern hotel ideally suited to work and relaxation. 68 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Dalang: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Reims (90km).
Station: Charleville-Meziers (6km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 280Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510Ffr (50% discount).

CHARTRES

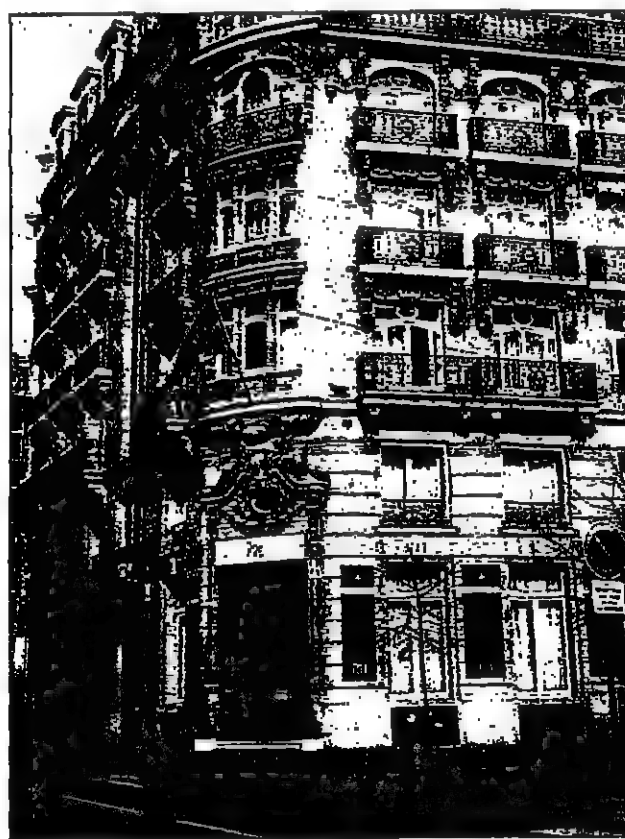
MERCURE CENTRE CHATELET

6 et 8 Avenue Jehan de Beauce, 28000 Chartres.
GRID REFERENCE: E4.
A mere 300m from the famous Gothic cathedral in the historic town of Chartres, overlooking the fertile plains of the Beauce. A quiet and comfortable hotel. 47 rooms.
Golf. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Orly (70km).
Station: Chartres (150m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510Ffr (50% discount).

CHATEAUROUX

MERCURE CHATEAUROUX CENTRE

16 Rue Victor Hugo, 36000 Châteauroux.
GRID REFERENCE: E5.
Situated within easy distance of shops and places of recreation, this is also an ideal hotel for holding conferences and business meetings. For tourists, the impressive valleys of the Creuse and the lakes of the Brenne are all within easy reach of the hotel. 60 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Jardins de Nohant: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.



Near the opera house: the Mercure Centre Le Royal

Airport: Limoges (130km).
Station: Châteauroux (300m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 290Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 420Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 480Ffr (50% discount).

CHERBOURG

MERCURE CHERBOURG PLAISANCE

Gare Maritime (Car Ferry), 50100 Cherbourg.
GRID REFERENCE: C2.
Facing the sea, on the sailing harbour and near the ferry terminal, a hotel suggesting an English yacht with oak and brass interiors. A starting point for Jersey, the D-Day beaches and Mont St-Michel. 54 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Clipper: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Cherbourg-Maupertus (15km).
Station: Cherbourg (800m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 245/350 Ffr (Bath/Showers) (25% discount).
Pink: 365/495 Ffr (Bath/Showers) (25% discount).
Red: 420/580 Ffr (Bath/Showers) (25% discount).

BREST

ALTEA HOTEL CONTINENTAL

Square de la Tour D'Auvergne, 22 Rue de Lyon, 29200 Brest.
GRID REFERENCE: A3.
In the heart of Brest, near the railway station and harbour. 75 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Conti: 7.30pm to 11pm. Golf nearby. Bar. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Brest-Guipavas (10km).
Station: Gare TGV (50km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not applicable.

COLMAR

MERCURE COLMAR CENTRE

15 Rue Golbery - Galerie Du Rempart, 68000 Colmar.
GRID REFERENCE: J4.
A modern hotel on the edge of the pedestrian district and near the Musée des Unterlinden. 76 rooms.
Restaurant: La Galerie: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Room service. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Strasbourg-Enzheim (65km); Bâle-Mulhouse (65km).
Station: Colmar (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 495Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 540Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA CHAMP DE MARS

2 Avenue de la Marne, 68000 Colmar.
GRID REFERENCE: J4.
Located in the town centre, in the middle of the Champ de Mars park. Near the railway station and 3km from the airport. 75 rooms.
Restaurant: Wistub: 7pm to 1am. Golf. Tennis. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Strasbourg-Enzheim (65km); Bâle-Mulhouse (65km).
Station: Colmar (1km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 550Ffr (50% discount).

DIJON

ALTEA CHATEAU BOURGOGNE

22 BD de la Marne B.P. 25, 21071 Dijon Cedex.
GRID REFERENCE: H5.
A few steps from the city centre, in front of the Congress Hall, an ideal place for business or leisure. Hotel fully air-conditioned, private underground car park. 121 rooms.
Restaurant: Château Bourgogne: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Dijon-Bourgogne (10km).
Station: Dijon (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510Ffr (50% discount).



Pond of tranquility: the Mercure Angers Centre overlooks the ornamental gardens

10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Lille (80km).
Station: Dunkirk (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 400Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 485Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 560Ffr (50% discount).

LA ROCHE SUR YON

MERCURE LAFAYETTE

117 Boulevard Aristide Briand, 85000 La Roche Sur Yon.
GRID REFERENCE: C6.
Located in the town centre, a favourite meeting place for demanding business people, as well as the perfect starting point for visiting the Vendée. 67 rooms.
Restaurant: Gallet: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes-Atlantique (65km).
Station: La Roche Sur Yon (400m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510Ffr (25% discount).

EPINAL

MERCURE EPINAL CENTRE

13 Place Stein - BP 242, 88007 Epinal Cedex.
GRID REFERENCE: I4.
A convivial and comfortable hotel in the city of images, in the heart of the town opposite the museum. 46 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Mouton Blanc: 12.30pm to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nancy-Mérouville (40km).
Station: Epinal (700m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 365Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 540Ffr (50% discount).

LA ROCHELLE SUD

ALTEA LES TROIS ILES

La Faisie, 17340 Châtellillon-Plage.
GRID REFERENCE: C6.
In an ideal location, just outside La Rochelle, opposite the islands of Ré, Aix and Oléron, a splendid hotel complex with swimming pool, tennis courts, golf range. 78 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Aïeux: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: La Rochelle Mairé (12km).
Station: La Rochelle (10km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 400Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 430Ffr (25% discount).
Red: 510Ffr (25% discount).

LA ROCHELLE

MERCURE LE YACHTMAN

23 Quai Valin, 17000 La Rochelle.
GRID REFERENCE: C6.
Across from the old port guarded by its two famous towers, a small seaside hotel set near the pedestrian district and town centre. 46 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Yachtman: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Golf. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: La Rochelle Mairé (12km).
Station: La Rochelle (10km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440Ffr (25% discount).
Red: 500Ffr (25% discount).

LE HAVRE

MERCURE BASSIN DU COMMERCE

Chaussée d'Angoulême, 76600 Le Havre.
GRID REFERENCE: D2.
Close by the ferry terminal and the André Malraux Fine Arts Museum, a quiet hotel, overlooking the commercial port. 96 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Trois Mâts: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Satellite TV. Swimming pool. Room service. Bar. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Océville (7km).
Station: Le Havre (60km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 520Ffr (50% discount).

LAON

ALTEA PARC DE L'AILLETTE

Golf de l'Ailette, 02860 Châmoille.
GRID REFERENCE: G2.
In the Park de l'Ailette, 12km south of Laon, on the water's edge and facing the golf course. 60 rooms.
Restaurant: L'Ailette: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Golf. Swimming pool. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Reims (50km).
Station: Laon (12km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 420Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 480Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA REUZE

Tour de Reuze, 2 Rue Jean Jaures, 59140 Dunkirk.
GRID REFERENCE: F1.
In the heart of the city, facing the harbour and at the crossroads of the main European tourist routes. Three hours from Paris, two hours from Brussels. 122 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Jardins de la Tour: noon to 3pm and 7pm to 10.30pm.

Pink: 535/595Ffr (standard/superior) (25% discount).
Red: 610/680Ffr (standard/superior) (25% discount).

LES SABLES D'OLONNE

MERCURE THALASSA LES SABLES

Lac de Tanchet, 85100 Les Sables D'Olonne.
GRID REFERENCE: C6.
Garden, patio, indoor seawater swimming pool, fitness centre, seawater spa in a hotel facing the Lac du Tanchet and the ocean. 100 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Grand Large: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Fitness room. Golf. Tennis. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (65km).
Station: Les Sables D'Olonne (3km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 420/500Ffr (landview/seaview) (25% discount).
Pink: 540/580Ffr (landview/seaview) (25% discount).
Red: 610/660Ffr (landview/seaview) (25% discount).

LILLE

MERCURE AEROPORT

110 Rue Jean Jaures, 59810 Lesquin.
GRID REFERENCE: G1.
A short distance from Lille airport, a large hotel with conference space for up to 700 persons. 213 rooms.
Restaurant: La Flamme: noon to 3pm and 7pm to midnight. Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Golf. Tennis. Swimming pool. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Lille-Lesquin (1km).
Station: Lille (7km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 440Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 590Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 680Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE LOMME

Al Lille-Dunkirk-Sortie Lomme, 59320 Englos.
GRID REFERENCE: G1.
At the crossroads of the routes leading to Paris, Dunkirk, Brussels, to the west of Lille. 96 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Flandre: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Lille-Lesquin (10km).
Station: Lille (10km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 530Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE CENTRE LE ROYAL

2 Boulevard Carnot, 59800 Lille.
GRID REFERENCE: G1.
Just behind the Opera, a completely remodelled hotel with a 19th-century facade. 102 rooms.
Golf. Bar. Parking. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Lille-Lesquin (15km).
Station: Lille (300m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 520Ffr (50% discount).

Continued Page 8

Continued from Page 7

LORIENT
MERCURE PALAIS CONGRES

31 Place Jules Ferry, 56100 Lorient.
GRID REFERENCE: B4.
In the town centre and close to the sea. Friendly atmosphere. 88 rooms.
Satellite TV. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Lorient-Mer (15km).
Station: Lorient (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 280 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 405 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 465 Ffr (50% discount).

LOUDUN
MERCURE RENAUDOT

40 Avenue de Lauze, 86200 Loudun.
GRID REFERENCE: D5.
The smallest and quietest of the Mercure hotels is found, as it should be, in a tiny town. 29 rooms.
Golf. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Poitiers-Mair (55km).
Station: Cars (500m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 250 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 350 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

MAUBEUGE
MERCURE LOUVOIS

RN2 - Route d'Avresnes, 59720 Louvois.
GRID REFERENCE: H2.
Conveniently placed near the ramparts of Maubeuge, the zoological gardens and public forests. 59 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Grillardin: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Golf. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Bruxelles (90km).
Station: Maubeuge (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 280 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510 Ffr (50% discount).

METZ
MERCURE METZ NORD

Rue du Fort Gambetta, 57140 Wolpp.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.
Only a few miles from the town centre, the hotel's restaurant is painted with frescoes depicting historic Metz. Piano bar, exercise track. 83 rooms.
Restaurant: Les 3 Arches: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Metz-Nancy-Lorraine (15km).
Station: Metz (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 290 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 450 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 510 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA ST-THIEBAULT

29 Place St-Thiebault, 57000 Metz.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.

Modern and elegant. In the heart of a pleasant town. A meeting place for businessmen. 112 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Quatre Saisons: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Metz-Nancy-Lorraine (20km).
Station: Metz (300m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500 Ffr (50% discount).

MULHOUSE
MERCURE ILE NAPOLEON

68390 Stathelm.
GRID REFERENCE: J4.
Close to the Swiss and German borders and five minutes from the Hardt forest, a functional and inviting hotel nestling in greenery. 98 rooms.
Restaurant: Ile Napoleon: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Tennis. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Mulhouse-Bâle (25km).
Station: Mulhouse (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 440 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA MULHOUSE

4 Place de Charles de Gaulle, 68100 Mulhouse.
GRID REFERENCE: J4.
This modern hotel benefits from an ideal location in the middle of the business centre, yet not far from the vineyards of Alsace. Ski resorts such as La Bresse are half an hour's drive away. 96 rooms.
Bar. Satellite TV. Parking. Airport: Mulhouse-Bâle (25km).
Station: Mulhouse (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 495 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 550 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE SAUSHEIM

RN 422 A, 68390 Sausheim.
GRID REFERENCE: J4.
A spacious hotel in a lush green setting 5km from Mulhouse and near the famous Automobile museum. 100 rooms.
Restaurant: La Tissandière: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Tennis. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Mulhouse-Bâle (25km).
Station: Mulhouse (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 465 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 550 Ffr (50% discount).

NANCY
MERCURE NANCY CENTRE

5 Rue des Carmes, 54000 Nancy.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.
An attractive hotel 100m from the Place Stanislas, and close to the train station. Two excellent conference rooms. 80 rooms.
Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Four-bed family room available.



The heart of the matter: the Altea Hotel Continental is ideally situated for shopping, sport and transport

Airport: Nancy-Essey (7km).
Station: Nancy (100m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 300 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 420 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 470 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA THIERS

11 Rue Raymond Poincaré, 54000 Nancy.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.
Opposite the railway station close to the Place Stanislas, the hotel was fully renovated last year. 192 rooms.
Restaurant: La Toison d'Or: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Tennis. Golf. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Metz-Nancy-Lorraine (35km).
Station: Nancy (70km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 475 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

ALTEA NANTES CARQUEFOU

RN23 - 3 Rue de l'Hotellerie, 44470 Carquefou.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.
Set in a calm and peaceful park, close to the La Beaujoire Exhibition Centre and the centre of Nantes. 76 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Trident: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Golf. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (21km).
Station: Nantes (7km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 300 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 430 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 500 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE NANTES OUEST

RN 165 Direction Vannes - La Baule, 44300 Vigneux de Bretagne.
GRID REFERENCE: I3.
Fifteen minutes from the airport via the new Chevre Bridge, next to the Atlantic beaches, a one-storey, quiet hotel with easy access. All the rooms are located around a luxuriantly planted patio. 90 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Jardin d'Atlantique: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (20km).
Station: Nantes (15km).

Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 345 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 460 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 530 Ffr (50% discount).

NEMOURS
ALTEA DARVAULT-NEMOURS

Aire de Darvaault - Autoroute A6, 77140 Nemours.
GRID REFERENCE: G4.
A handsome hotel for business and tourism, on the banks of the Marne Canal, 60 minutes from Paris, and five minutes from the cathedral. 124 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Ombres: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Golf. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Reims Champagne (12km).
Station: Gare de Reims (1.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 465 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

PERONNE
MERCURE ASSEVILLERS

Autoroute A1 - Aire d'Assévillers, 80200 Assévillers.
GRID REFERENCE: F2.
Accessible from both the Autoroute and the Nationale, fully air-conditioned, 45 minutes from Paris and 30 minutes from Lille. 92 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Anguillères: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Satellite TV. Room service. Bar. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Roissy C.D.G. (99km).
Station: Lille (66km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 490 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 580 Ffr (50% discount).

POITIERS
MERCURE RELAIS DE POITIERS

Route Nationale 10, 86360 Chasseneuil de Poitou.
GRID REFERENCE: E6.
Stop-over hotel 6km from Poitiers. 2nd floor from Futuroscope Park, specially designed for conferences. 96 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Relais de Poitiers: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Swimming pool. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Poitiers-Mair (8km).
Station: Poitiers (7km).

Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 345 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 460 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 530 Ffr (50% discount).

REIMS
ALTEA CHAMPAGNE

31 Boulevard Paul Doumer, 51100 Reims.
GRID REFERENCE: G3.
A handsome hotel for business and tourism, on the banks of the Marne Canal, 60 minutes from Paris, and five minutes from the cathedral. 124 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Ombres: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Golf. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Reims Champagne (12km).
Station: Gare de Reims (1.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 360 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 465 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

MERCURE REIMS EST

Route de Chalons-Les Essards, 51100 Reims.
GRID REFERENCE: G3.
A warm and functional hotel 3km from the town centre. 103 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Vignobles: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Swimming pool. Golf. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Reims Champagne (8km).
Station: Reims (4km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 590 Ffr (50% discount).

RENNES
MERCURE RENNES CENTRE

Rue P.L. Courrier (Angle rue Pré Bonté), B.P. 5091 - 35061 Rennes Cedex.
GRID REFERENCE: C4.
Located in the business and tourist section, a new, very quiet hotel set in the former printing plant of the newspaper Ouest-France, with beautiful turn-of-the-century architecture. 104 rooms.
Satellite TV. Golf. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Rennes St-Jacques (8km).
Station: Rennes T.G.V. (800m).

Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 340 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 580 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA PARC DU COLOMBIER

Place Du Colombier, Rue du Capitaine Maigret, 35000 Rennes.
GRID REFERENCE: C4.
In the heart of the city, an ideal rendezvous for business people. 6km from St-Jacques airport and 800m from the railway station. 140 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Godic: noon to 2pm and 7.30pm to 10.15pm. Golf. Tennis. Room service. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Rennes St-Jacques (8km).
Station: Rennes T.G.V. (800m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 340 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

ROUBAIX
ALTEA GRAND HOTEL

22 Avenue J.B. Lebas, 59100 Roubaix.
GRID REFERENCE: G1.
A luxury hotel in the heart of Roubaix. Ten minutes from Lille and Belgium. 92 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Marquises: noon to 2pm and 8pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Lille Lesquin (12km).
Station: Roubaix (300m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 420 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 490 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 590 Ffr (50% discount).

ROUEN
ALTEA CHAMP DE MARS

Avenue Aristide Briand, 76000 Rouen.
GRID REFERENCE: E3.
On the banks of Seine facing the Ile Lévêque, near the Champ de Mars and just 800m from the pedestrian town centre and cathedral. New and very comfortable hotel. 139 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Champ de Mars: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Rouen-Boos (12km).
Station: Rouen (1.5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.

Clear: 480 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 530 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 580 Ffr (50% discount).

ST JEAN-DE-MONTS
ALTEA LE SLOI

Avenue des Pays de Monts, 85160 St-Jean-de-Monts.
GRID REFERENCE: C3.
Close to a large sandy beach, between the golf course and the seawater spa. Casino and conference centre nearby. 44 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Sloi: noon to 2pm and 7.15pm to 10pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Room service. Tennis. Golf. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Nantes Atlantique (65km).
Station: Challans (15km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 350 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 475 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 555 Ffr (25% discount).

ST-VALERY-EN-CAUX
ALTEA ST-VALERY-EN-CAUX

14 Avenue Georges Clemenceau, 76460 St-Valery-en-Caux.
GRID REFERENCE: E2.
On the harbour, 150m from the railway station of this delightful seaside resort. 149 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Marais: noon to 2pm and 7.30pm to 9.30pm. Satellite TV. Swimming pool. Golf. Tennis. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Rouen/Boos (72km).
Station: St-Valery-en-Caux (100m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 330 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 365 Ffr (25% discount).
Red: 420 Ffr (25% discount).

STRASBOURG
MERCURE STRASBOURG CENTRE

25 Rue Thomann, 67000 Strasbourg.
GRID REFERENCE: J3.
Very attractive and modern hotel in Strasbourg's town centre, between Kibler Place and St-Pierre-le-Jeune church. A short walk from the cathedral and the main market. 98 rooms.
Satellite TV. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Strasbourg-Entzheim (15km).
Station: Strasbourg (2km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 565 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 650 Ffr (50% discount).

ALTEA PONT DE L'EUROPE

Parc du Rhin, 67000 Strasbourg.
GRID REFERENCE: J3.
Set in a park on the banks of the Rhine. Five minutes from the city centre, close to the Pont de l'Europe, the bridge linking France and Germany. 93 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Liseron: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Satellite TV. Room service. Bar. Golf. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Strasbourg-Entzheim (15km).

Station: Strasbourg (6km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 365 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 470 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 520 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE STRASBOURG SUD

Rue du 23 Novembre, 67540 Osvald.
GRID REFERENCE: J3.
Ten minutes from the town centre and Entzheim international airport, with swimming pool, patio, greenery and recreation areas. 95 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Prunus: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Swimming pool. Golf. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Strasbourg-Entzheim (8km).
Station: Strasbourg (8km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 310 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 460 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 530 Ffr (50% discount).

TOURS
ALTEA TOURS-CENTRE

4 Place Thiers, 37000 Tours.
GRID REFERENCE: E5.
Located at the crossroads of several major Autoroutes, about 500m from downtown and the railway station. Ideal starting point to visit the Châteaux de la Loire. 120 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Muses: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Bar. Room service. Satellite TV. Tennis. Golf. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Tours St-Symphorien (3km).
Station: Tours (500m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 590 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE TOURS NORD

7 Rue de l'Aviation, Paray-Monlay, 37100 Tours Nord.
GRID REFERENCE: E5.
Opening on July 1, the hotel is close to St-Symphorien airport. 93 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Vignes: noon to 10.30pm. Bar. Swimming pool. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: St-Symphorien (2km).
Station: Tours TGV (6km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 380 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 495 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: Not available.

VAL DE REUIL
ALTEA LOUVIERS

Lieu-Dit Les Cloutiers, 27100 Val-de-Reuil.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
Close to the Bort forest and the A13 Paris-Caen Autoroute. 58 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Cloutiers: noon to 2pm and 7pm to 10pm. Swimming pool. Bar. Golf. Tennis. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airport: Rouen/Boos (30km).
Station: Val de Reuil (5km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 295 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 450 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 515 Ffr (50% discount).

Hotels: the Paris area

MERCURE LA DEFENSE

18-30 Rue Baudin, 92400 Courbevoie.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
A modern city hotel, directly linked to the shopping centre, and only five minutes by Metro from the Champs Elysees. 500 rooms.
Restaurant: L'Atelier. Piano Bar. Satellite TV. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airports: Orly (35 mins). Charles de Gaulle (35 mins).
Station: RER La Défense.
Metro: La Défense.
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 620 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 750 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 890 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE MONTMARTRE

113 Rue Caulaincourt, 75018 Paris.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
Down the hill of Montmartre.



Site for sore eyes: no trip to Paris is complete without a visit to Montmartre

a bustling hotel close to the Moulin Rouge. Ideal for business meetings or discovering Paris. 308 rooms.
Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Public parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Roissy C.D.G. (30km).
Station: St Lazare (11km).
Metro: Place Clichy (60m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 620 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 820 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 940 Ffr (50% discount).

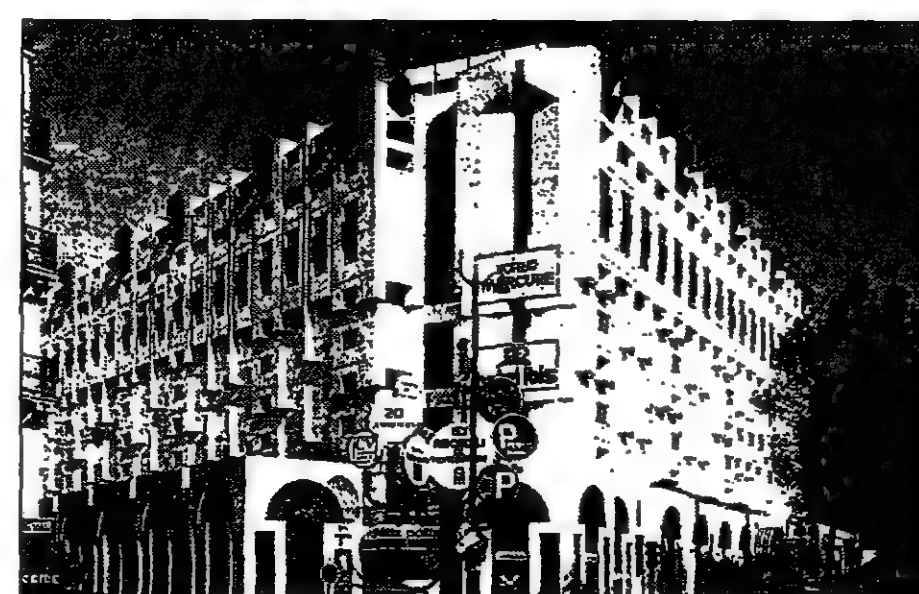
MERCURE VAUGIRARD

69 Boulevard Victor, 75015 Paris.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
The ideal left-bank hotel unites efficiency, modernity and the good life. 133 rooms.
Restaurant: La Terrasse: noon to 3pm and 7pm to 11pm. Bar. Room service. Parking. Four-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Orly (12km).
Station: Montparnasse (20km).

Station: Montparnasse (4km).
Metro: Porte de Versailles (100m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 680 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 920 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 1400 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE PORTE D'ORLEANS

13 Rue Faneols Orly, 92129 MontRed.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
A welcoming hotel worth remembering at exhibition time. Particularly well suited for seminars. 192 rooms.
Restaurant: Les Colonnades: noon to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Room service. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Orly (12km).
Station: Montparnasse (3km).
Metro: Porte d'Orléans (750m).
RER: RER Gentiilly (750m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.



Busy corner: the bustling Mercure Montmartre is close to the Moulin Rouge

Clear: 550 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 550 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 880 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE VAL DE FONTENAY

Avenue des Olympiades, 94120 Fontenay-Sous-Bois.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
Five minutes from Marne-la-Vallée. 15 minutes from Gare de Lyon and Eurodisney by the A line of the RER, this hotel is thoroughly modern - magnetic keys, soundproofing, air-conditioning. 133 rooms.
Restaurant: Capitaine Némor: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 10.30pm. Satellite TV. Room service. Bar. Parking. Three-bed family room available. Rooms for disabled.
Airport: Orly (25km).
Station: Val de Fontenay (10m).
Metro: RER Ligne A Val de Fontenay (10m).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.

Clear: 450 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 550 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 630 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE OUEST-MAUREPAS

1 Route de Camargue, 78310 Maurepas.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
Very near Paris, 15km from Versailles and its palace. 8km from the modern town of St-Quentin-en-Yvelines, and 2km from the West Paris industrial zone of Coignières-Maurepas. 91 rooms.
Restaurant: La Camargue: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Satellite TV. Bar. Fitness room. Golf. Parking. Three-bed family room available.
Airports: Orly (40km).
Station: RER RER (13km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 390 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 520 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 580 Ffr (50% discount).

Clear: 350 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 480 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 530 Ffr (50% discount).

MERCURE OUEST-MEULAN

Lieu-Dit Le Belle, 78250 Meulan.
GRID REFERENCE: F3.
On the historic landmark of Belle Island, in the Seine, a small hotel in an exceptional setting offering with canoeing and other sports. Ideal for work or relaxation. 69 rooms.
Restaurant: Le Belle: noon to 2.30pm and 7pm to 11pm. Satellite TV. Room service. Bar. Tennis. Parking. Four-bed family room available.
Airport: Roissy C.D.G. (40km).
Station: Les Mureaux (3km).
Metro: Roissy RER (13km).
Tariff: full tariff shown per room per night.
Clear: 390 Ffr (25% discount).
Pink: 520 Ffr (50% discount).
Red: 580 Ffr (50% discount).

YOUR BOOKING APPLICATION FORM

Please read How to Book and the Conditions before completing this booking application form. This form must be completed for all reservations. Booking will not be confirmed until Mercure and Altea reservation centre has received your booking application form plus the different tokens.

Title (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____ Surname _____ Initials _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Day Tel: _____ Evening Tel: _____

Number of adults over 16 (including self) _____

Number of children under 16 _____

RESERVATION DETAIL

HOTEL 1

Hotel name _____ Alternative if not available _____

Town/City _____

Arrival date _____ No of nights _____

Number of 3/4 bed rooms _____ Number of single rooms _____

Number of double rooms _____ Number of twin rooms _____

The applicable discounts will automatically be applied to your reservation

HOTEL 2

Hotel name _____ Alternative if not available _____

Town/City _____

Arrival date _____ No of nights _____

Number of 3/4 bed rooms _____ Number of single rooms _____

Number of double rooms _____ Number of twin rooms _____

The applicable discounts will automatically be applied to your reservation

Further reservations should be continued of a separate sheet of paper

SPECIAL REQUESTS

YOUR CREDIT/CHARGE CARD DETAILS

This section MUST be completed for all reservations. Your account will only be charged for the first night of your booking in the event that you fail to arrive at a confirmed reservation. Your account should be settled before departure from your hotel by credit/charge card, local currency or travellers cheques.

Charge/Credit Card Type _____ Access _____ Visa _____ Diners _____ Amex _____ (please circle)

Card Number _____ Name on Card _____

Expiry Date on Card _____

Address of cardholder if different from above _____</

On track for bargains in wine country

Robin Young continues his guide to wine-buying in France with some tips on dealing direct from the growers

The most exciting and pleasurable way of buying wine in France is by dealing direct with the wine growers. Touring the wine region, tasting in the *chai*, and haggling in a friendly manner over a glass in the vigneron's kitchen is a lot more fun than standing in the queue for a hypermarket checkout. Buying direct is also, if you are careful about it, the way of getting the best wine bargains. Add to that the inestimable value of being able to serve to your friends a wine which you have discovered yourself and whose maker you know, and it is not easy to see why the British do not follow the example of the French and buy most of their wine this way.

In France most wine lovers buy much of their wine directly from the growers, either by mail order or by paying an annual visit to the vineyards. Many growers sell the bulk of their wine by mail order, and the rest in what we would call farmgate sales. Buying wine direct, though, is not as easy as it is, and there are pitfalls.

When I first became interested in wine it was quite possible for me, as a novice with not even schoolboy French (I learnt German), to front up at Cos d'Estournel in St-Estephe and Chateau Ducru-Beaucaillou in St-Julien demanding to taste the wine on the chance that I might buy a few bottles. They tapped barrels for me, showed me the *chai*, explained the vineyard layout and winemaking techniques and, at Cos, introduced me to the carthorses who still worked on the estate. (No, I am not as old as that might make me sound: this was in the 1960s.)

Nowadays, Cos and Ducru are internationally celebrated "super-second" whose wines are in limited allocation even to well-established wine merchants and are certainly not available by the odd bottle or two to casual callers at the property.

Some of the great Bordeaux chateaux have now geared themselves up to welcome visitors for guided tours, but free tastings are a thing of the past. On the other hand, you will very likely find a welcome, so long as you are not calling at an inconveniently busy time, at most of the *petits chateaux*, the Bordeaux region's humbler properties, which have quite a glut of good wines still to sell.

The first rule is to do some homework before you set out. Get to know something about the wines of the region you are going to visit and, if you have not already done so, develop your taste for them by sampling a few and noting the

identities of those you like, keeping a list of growers or co-operatives whose wines you find attractive.

If you are a regular customer of a British wine merchant, ask whether they can offer any introductions which might be useful.

Take some literature with you, particularly the wine list of any British merchant who specialises in the wines of the area. For example, if you are going to Beaujolais you should already be familiar with the list of Roger Harris Wines, the specialist Beaujolais supplier working from Loke Farm, West Longville, Norfolk. If you are headed down the Loire or Rhône valleys you should know Robin Yapp's list from Yapp Brothers, Merre, Wiltshire.

Like several other British wine merchants, these chaps started in business by doing what you are about to do yourself: taking a vehicle into the wine country to buy some wine. The idea in taking their lists along with you is not to attempt to cut into their now well-established lines of supply, but to have a clear guide to the prices you should expect to be paying and the qualities you should be looking for.

In every wine region of France you will find that signs announcing *Vins - Vente Directe* line the roads. The even more pressing invitation *Dégustation - Vente* assures you that you will be offered a tasting.

As a general rule one can assume that the bigger and brighter the boards, the less attractive and more pricey the wines will be. Where free tastings are offered, you can theoretically leave without buying if you do not like what you taste. Be warned, though: it sometimes requires considerable courage and determination to exercise that right.

Unless they belong to local co-operatives, large roadside shops offering wines in pre-packed gift wrapping and souvenir boxes are unlikely to be the source of great vinous pleasure. Co-operatives are particularly important and good in Alsace, the south-west and the Rhône valley, but are also worth seeking out in Burgundy (where wine buying from individual growers is especially tricky), Beaujolais, and even the Médoc.

As often as not the best wines may be for sale at a house or a farm which carries no sign at all. The only way to find such a source may be by chatting to the locals, starting perhaps in the village *tabac*, café or restaurant. If a popular restaurant or grocery stocks the wines of a local grower, it is fair indication that his reputation is good, though not necessarily that he has any stocks



Taste for adventure: some growers are still willing to give tastings to intrepid potential customers who turn up at the door

left to sell. An investment of 159 francs in *Le Guide Hachette des Vins*, which is on sale in most French bookshops, is likely to pay dividends. The volume lists a lot of producers in each region with their addresses, telephone numbers and opening hours. It warns you if an appointment is necessary and details the wines the growers have to sell, with star ratings, tasting notes, and a price guide, which is printed red for wines the editors think particularly good value.

There is a similar book, more partisan and selective and written in even more awkwardly idiomatic French, produced by the Gault-Millau team. English reference books, of which the best is Hugh Johnson's *Wine Companion*, list top-class producers region by region, but are less comprehensive.

Once you have found your grower, you are likely to be offered a tasting, probably in the cellar. A good cellar should be tidy and smell pleasant. Decent wine seldom

springs from unhygienic conditions. You are unlikely to be offered the best wine first, but your comments on what you are given to taste may well determine how much further your tasting opportunities go. It is useless to pretend to knowledge you do not have: the only advisable tactic is to say what you think frankly. It is here that your pre-tasting may stand you in good stead.

Buying wine from a grower to bring home should theoretically enable you to avoid VAT, which is 18.6 per cent in France. The grower has to fill in a VA2 form for you.

He may keep a stock of these. More likely you will have to fetch one from the local tax office, the *Bureau de la Perception* in towns, or sometimes the *tabac* in a village. In my limited experience tracking down and completing the required documentation can still be a frustrating and time-consuming experience, though procedures have been simplified in recent years. You should keep receipts for any wines you purchase to show customs.

At present the duty-free limit with British customs is eight litres per adult, and only five if you bring in spirits, fortified or sparkling wines as well. Next year, though, the limit shoots up to 120 bottles for each adult, and possibly more if you can satisfy the Customs officers that your imports are exclusively for personal use.

Meanwhile, it can still be worthwhile on wines for which you have an urgent need, ie those you intend to drink before and over Christmas, to go over the limit and stump up the duty.

You will be required to pay 95p a bottle on excess bottles of still wine (sparkling wines and champagne cost more) plus 17.5 per cent VAT on the purchase price. You may be able to reclaim any VAT paid in France for which you can show a receipt. Good hunting!

strikingly commercial development is the Aquadul indoor swimming pool on the seafloor. Its lofty water chutes and wave machine suit those lacking the energy for the one kilometre walk across the sand which sea-bathing inconveniently requires at low tide. The expanse of firm yellow sand is splendid for sand-yachting and for young motorists keen to re-enact the driving sequences from *Un Homme et Une Femme*.

The town's busy programme of events includes sailing regattas, windsurfing, dog trials, tennis championships and L'Enduro motor-bike race. That last, an event so popular it has sometimes to be marshalled by the army, also gives its name to a wickedly delicious chocolate and praline treat to be savoured at the Lido, a first-class pâtisserie and *salon de thé* at the corner of Rue Jean and Rue Londres.

Le Touquet is dressed overall with flowers, which smother the boulevard roundabouts and drip from hanging baskets on the lamp posts. There are also caravan sites and camping grounds tucked away among the trees.

Le Touquet's small and grassy airfield overlooks the fishing port of Étaples and Luyens's magnificent war memorial. The airport is quiet and mostly used by private pilots with their own small planes, though there are a few scheduled flights from Britain each day. The terminal restaurant, L'Escale, is so good locals go there to eat.

Between the woods and the river, alongside the racetrack, the pony club and the equestrian centre, is a lawn devoted to dressage training for dogs. In Le Touquet, though, later-day Bernie Woosters are welcome, even canines, banned from the beach by municipal decree, are required to be well behaved.

R.Y.

Le Touquet-Paris-Plage is 20 miles from Boulogne, which is served by Hoverport Seaair services from Folkestone and Dover, and by PGO ferries from Dover. Love Air operates flights to Le Touquet airport from Lydd with return fares from £69 to £89, and from Stansted, from £103 to £195.

Cheap house, costly hobby

I am not by nature an acquisitive person but there is no denying that few "for sale" signs can have been erected in the civilised world without me being found gazing at the property at one time or another in search of some signal that I should buy it. All evidence — of location, size, condition, financial resources — mitigating against the venture is disregarded, at least in the first flush of enthusiasm.

"Maison à vendre" having an altogether more romantic ring to it than "for sale", my rubbernecking activities around the French property market are very nearly legendary. Even now, there exists near St Dolay in southern Brittany a lady estate agent who could have sworn she sold me a house for £6,000 back in 1985. Even now, gazing at black and white photographs of this property (no floor, no water, no electricity) I can hear myself enthusing over its tremendous potential and splendid new roof. Even now, I cannot for the life of me think why I did not buy it.

All we have done is bought furniture, painted outside and in and had a concrete floor put in a store room at the back. That was under three years ago; now the house is worth nearly £30,000, even in a depressed market. We increased our British mortgage, on a flat in Bristol, to pay for the French house and when we sold the flat last year the proceeds covered the mortgage increase with £15,000 to spare.

Obviously the move would be more of a gamble now than it was then so I stress: don't buy in France purely for investment. Nor should you buy there, even in the Dordogne, if you are expecting year-round sunshine. You can freeze there in April and be rained upon in May or even June. Nor is France idyllic and universally friendly, it has some boring bits and some insufferably starchy people.

France is merely different. Don't buy there on the basis of a single holiday and don't under-estimate the time and expense involved in getting to and from. Bear in mind the cost of the Channel crossings and the drive south is no picnic if time is short.

Put a damper on it? *Au contraire*. If you really like France you will be enormously rewarded by having a home away from home.

PETER BARNARD

COMING UP IN PASSPORT TO FRANCE

A REGULAR series, *Insiders' France*, will start on Tuesday next week, including handy information for travellers. We would also like seasoned francophiles to send us their tips so that we can pass them on to the uninitiated. Readers might like to know where to find a good meal in Rouen, a nightclub in Bordeaux, or a scenic short-cut through the Dordogne. And those who understand the traffic system or the intricacies of *pétanque* may care to share their wisdom with other readers. Send your tips to *Insiders' France*, Times Features, 1 Pennington St., London, E1 9XN.

Starting this Friday *The Times/LBC Last Minute France Hotline* will be your invaluable guide to stop-press holiday, travel and rental bargains available across the Channel. Every Thursday after 6pm on LBC Newstalk (97.3FM) Angela Rippon in her *DriveTime* programme will talk to a *Times* columnist on aspects of France and preview the last-minute offers available in the paper on Friday.

Bertie Wooster's seaside suburb

TOWN OF THE WEEK LE TOUQUET

Le Touquet-Paris-Plage is a town full of follies. Largely built and developed by the British, it is enjoyed by the French (who give it three-star rating in the Michelin Green Guide), and inhabited mainly by the wildly wealthy. A garden suburb by the sea, set in a forest and flanked by a river, it has recently added a lake to its catalogue of assets.

Le Touquet's villas, set back from boulevards and avenues which sweep grandly through the woods, are an amazing collection of rich people's fantasies. Some are thatched and timbered in the English manner, some are coiffed with patterned tiles, others resemble overgrown Swiss chalets, Hansel and Gretel gingerbread houses, mini-Versailles, or turreted Highland shooting lodges.

It is fitting that Le Touquet should have been the home of P.G. Wodehouse, who created an impossibly idyllic world peopled by silly asses living in comfortable villas and playing lots of golf. Le Touquet, artificial and anachronistic but delightful, with two and a half golf-courses, 26 championship tennis courts, an equestrian centre and a racetrack, would still be just their cup of tea.

The place was originally conceived just over a century ago by John Whitley, a Yorkshire businessman. Garnier, the architect of the Paris Opéra, was a consultant for his schemes. Louis Pasteur and Sarah Bernhardt were patrons. De Villemessant, the founder of *Le Figaro* newspaper, hit on the wheeze of adding Paris-Plage (Paris's beach) to Le Touquet's name, and the golf links were opened in 1904 by the British prime minister, Arthur Balfour.

During the 1920s the British made Le Touquet-Paris-Plage the choice destination for the smart set. The Westminster Hotel still treasures pictures of the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) setting out to go drag-hunting in 1927. When the Picardy Hotel opened in 1929 the first clients were greeted by a



On the hoof: Le Touquet's facilities include an equestrian centre

jazz band from America and a tango band from Argentina.

For a time only chauffeur-driven cars were allowed. The owner of Selfridges hired a train to bring his guests. The era ended with the war, when in a blunder of Woosterish proportions the Wodehouses, last to leave because they were getting their Pekinese into quarantine, allowed themselves to be taken prisoner by the Germans. Yet some of the atmosphere survives.

In the tightly-knit grid of streets that make up the town centre behind the seafloor, shops selling Persian carpets, furs, jewels and oil paintings cohabit amiably with a smaller number selling simple necessities. The most astonishing buildings are the gloriously kitsch orange brick Hôtel de Ville, doo-

rated inside with murals of bold banality depicting medieval life: the Ste Jeanne d'Arc church and the Post Office, which share an elegant art nouveau style; and a covered market which is a grand, semi-circular arcade simultaneously reminiscent of Lutetians and of an over-sized stud farm.

Flavio's Club de la Forêt is a restaurant of style and distinction whose menus start with a 150-franc weekday lunch and rise to a 680-franc blow-out centred on a choice of five ways with lobster. Flavio himself is an affable and chatty Anglo-Italian veteran of the pre-war London hotels. If Flavio's seems too swank, down the Rue de Metz is the most frequented fish canteen of northern France. Serge Péard's restaurant lives beside his

fish shop beneath a carapace of neon signs. Customers have to circumnavigate crates of fresh-caught fish to reach the dining room, through which speeding waiters bear aloft bowls of *soupe de poissons* and platters overhung with complicated crustaceans. A meal here makes an unforgettable experience at about £20 a head.

Wodehouse's former home, Low Wood, is, like many of its neighbours on the Avenue du Golf, an imitation farmhouse. Now called Low Wood Manor, it is near Le Manoir hotel and backs on to the golf course. There is no plaque and few locals know the great humorist ever lived there.

Perhaps it is only a matter of time before Le Touquet's elegance is smothered, but as yet the only

MEDIA MOLE

EXACTLY which member of the cabinet has bad breath? The reason for the concern is that *Spitting Image* has taken to casting aspersion upon a cabinet member recently. David Mellor has been insisting privately to his friends that it certainly isn't him. But who is?

Now Mr Mellor's interest in *Spitting Image* is well known, for when he was still at the Home Office he made inquiries about when he might be appearing in latex.

But his desire to be portrayed in rubber pales into insignificance by comparison with Jeffrey Archer's. The former deputy chairman of the Conservative party apparently went to the trouble of sending the *Spitting Image* team a tape recording of his voice to make sure they got it right.

On the halitosis question, all the *Spitting Image* men are prepared to say is that the cabinet member they had in mind was rather shorter in stature than the right honourable member for Putney.

WHEN it comes to big autobiographies, there is probably not going to be a bigger one — in size anyway — than Luciano Pavarotti's. The great tenor's freshly minted agent in London has been soliciting bids for his life story for a suitably large sum, not unadjacent to £75,000.

One mild-mannered publisher made the mistake of asking if he might see a treatment of the story before committing himself to spending quite such a substantial sum as an advance against royalties.

"You want autobiography of Mr Pavarotti, you send cheque for £75,000," came the fierce reply. "Then perhaps Mr

Pavarotti send you treatment." Not surprisingly, the publisher declined.

But the offer he could refuse wasn't refused elsewhere.

D.C. THOMSON of Dundee, creator of *Desperate Dan*, Dennis the Menace, Cord the Cat and many other childhood heroes, has long been reticent about his business. A private company, the publisher of the *Dandy* and the *Beano* has kept a low profile. But it has also been a shrewd investor.

None of its investments was shrewder than the almost 20 per cent stake it acquired in Britain's biggest ITV company, Central Television. The brothers Thomson acquired their five million shares almost a decade ago when the price was hardly more than £1 each. The shares now



Desperate Dan: profitable

stand at more than £14. But if you ask Thomson headquarters if it has any television holdings, a polite lady explains: "I'm afraid we aren't at liberty to tell you that."

Another sign of the company's legendary fiscal sobriety is that it declines to have one of the signs of modern corporate success — a fax machine.

THE *Observer's* circulation may have temporarily slipped below that of *The Sunday Telegraph*, but its proprietor's enthusiasm for it remains. At a recent Loughborough board meeting, it was suggested that the *Observer* was a drain on resources and therefore a potential item for sale. "Why are you trying to make me miserable?" TONY Rowland replied. "I could have been sitting in my garden instead of listening to this. The *Observer* is not for sale."

GEOFFREY WANSELL



Pavarotti: going for a song

Opening up a weird world

The magazine with the motto 'readers beware' is being relaunched. Martin Rosenbaum reports

Man shoots dog is not news: dog shoots man is. This is the view at least at *Fortean Times*, the peculiar but entertaining magazine dedicated to chronicling "all manner of strange phenomena".

The June edition reports, for example, on unfortunate hunters throughout the world who, in the reverse of the normal pattern, have been shot by animals. One was shot by a dog jumping on his gun, while in other instances the unexpected culprits were a fleeing rabbit and a snake which coiled itself around the weapon. And this is not to mention the man who shot a stag on a rocky ledge and was killed when it fell on top of him.

The journal's motley contents defy categorisation. One issue earlier this year featured UFO sightings in Uzbekistan, a call to establish a minister for psychic phenomena, and a listing of all known robberies committed with the aid of cucumbers and other vegetables disguised as weapons.

Fortean Times's devoted readers are as diverse as its subject matter, ranging from those who consider it enjoyable absurdity to others liable to suspect an inter-galactic conspiracy behind the most mundane of coincidences. Most fall in between, regarding the phenomena it covers with a mixture of belief and scepticism.

Until recently the magazine was available only on subscription and was known to a limited number of enthusiasts. Since being acquired last year by John Brown Publishing, it has added newsgent sales of about 15,000 for each bimonthly issue to its 3,000 or so subscribers.

However, it currently seems unlikely to reach the target of 50,000 proclaimed by the company's man-

aging director, John Brown. He now attributes this target to his own "over-enthusiasm", a forgivable fault in the publisher who took sales of the comic *Viz* from a few thousand around Newcastle to more than a million throughout Britain.

Mr Brown and the magazine's editors, Bob Rickard and Paul Sieveking, are now taking the next steps in bringing the bizarre material to a wider audience. *Fortean Times* is being relaunched this month in a new A4 format, which they hope newsgents will find easier to display.

The highlight of the June relaunch issue is a colour poster on crop circles. This topic fascinates Mr Rickard, who founded the journal as a one-man operation in 1973. "You have explanations varying from scientific on the one hand to supernatural on the other. All being investigated by people who only look for evidence to confirm their view and ignore everything else."

The magazine is named after Charles Fort, an unorthodox American philosopher (1874-1932) who studied reports of anomalous phenomena which conventional science could not explain. Its mission is to continue his work. "We are not anti-science," says Mr Rickard. "But we are guardians of the little things which cannot be accommo-

dated in a scientific approach. We want readers to appreciate the wonderful complexity of everyday life. We appeal to open-minded people all over the world and give them something to think about."

The subject matter may be extraordinary, but the tone of the magazine is sober and measured, almost academic. It has acquired a reputation for independence and thoroughness, but it is not to everyone's taste. One critic described it as possessing "the intellectual authority of a turnip field". Mr Rickard hopes that newsgents will place it by *New Scientist* and *Scientific American*, but some who take a different view of its credibility have put it next to *Viz* and *Private Eye*.

The editors make clear that they assert neither the truth nor the falsity of the many strange accounts they pass on. Criticised by a reader for printing the apparently incorrect claim that Tokyo has the world's only human brain collection, Mr Sieveking replied: "If we were to publish only material that we knew for certain to be true, *Fortean Times* would be slender indeed. Our material is innately borderline and contentious."

Mr Rickard is reluctant to reveal his own opinions on the phenomena he reports, but relents when pressed. He thinks that human beings sometimes do spontaneously combust and that fish occasionally rain from the sky, but that nobody has really been kidnapped by aliens.

If you want to know why people who have seen flying saucers often say that their occupants looked like frogs or lizards, then read the new issue of *Fortean Times*. But bear in mind what Mr Rickard describes as the magazine motto: *caveat lector* — reader beware.



Dog shoots man: the victim and the culprit in *Fortean Times*

Room with a viewing

The high-tech
Videothèque in
Paris is a film
buff's paradise

of pressing the "play" button and waiting: if sitting in the right place, one can look up and watch a mechanical arm go across, remove the cassette from its slot and insert it into an unseen video machine,

hours in the *salle*, a darkened, high-tech equivalent of the White-Petering Gallery. Here are clusters of screens, each with an armchair in front of it, speakers built into the wings at one's ears. In front of the screen is another keyboard, and it is a roomer's work to master the seemingly limitless system of indexing. Faced with such riches, there is a danger that one's mind can go numb. Once the novelty wears off, it becomes clear that the wise plan ahead.

A film chosen, it is then a matter

which is linked to the screen and the control buttons. The effect is of sitting inside a huge visual equivalent of a jukebox. Outside, people are queuing for groceries, but here is a childhood friend of Marcel Proust, his memories caught on film in the 1950s, and later those of the legendary Celeste, his maid, whose duties included the building of concertina pages in his notebooks to accommodate the myriad additions and corrections. And here is the death of Edith Piaf in 1964. All of Paris seems to be at the

funeral. Marlene Dietrich serene above the throng.

Why is there nowhere in London to watch such things at will? Despite the flurry of cinematic interest in *Fortean*, an early 1970s version of *A Room With a View* on the BBC has been overlooked. Equally unobtainable are television versions of Ford's *Parade's End* and of Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy and *Vile Bodies*. It is perplexing that they should not be as accessible as an old novel. It would require a building no larger than a bingo hall.

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An open-book career

A career as librarian is definitely not suited to those with a quiet, retiring disposition, according to Barbara Stratton of the Library Association. "You need an outgoing personality and an analytical mind and to be able to communicate with clarity," she says. The modern library requires staff trained on computer systems to research and present information.

There are two ways into the profession: at graduate level, with a library and information studies degree, or by postgraduate qualification. The local library may spring to mind as the obvious place to find a librarian, but this is only one option. Fewer than a third of Library Association members are employed in public libraries. The professional librarian also works in national libraries, such as libraries for academic institutions and teaching hospitals. The number of commercial libraries has also increased, and many young librarians join law or accountancy firms.

Mark Lardner, aged 31, has developed a special interest in Europe in order to serve his clients best. For the past four years, he has worked at the Institute of Directors library and is now senior business information officer. Most of his work deals with enquiries — not as simple as it sounds. "I can be asked about anything from privatisation in Poland to which are the largest unquoted companies," he says. "My colleagues and I aim for a

Modern libraries demand outgoing personalities and analytical minds, Bernardine Coverley writes

turnaround of half an hour." The staff of seven runs a shift system to cover telephone enquiries, the information desk and "housekeeping duties" of filing and updating.

Mr Lardner has seen the volume of enquiries grow by 50 per cent. The Institute's 33,000 United Kingdom members say that the library is among its most important facilities.

Industry values information and a well-run library is regarded as an asset. Opportunities exist for those with special interests or languages. Job titles can be either information officer or librarian, but whatever the apparent differences, the core of work is the same: organising and retrieving information, whether it comes in the shape of books, journals, extracts, lists or statistics. Information technology has had a great impact, which is reflected in the content of courses and employers' expectations.

"We have an in-house database for all the books so I can make a list of what we have on a particular subject," says Lorna Neil, who works at a multidisciplinary library attached to St John's, a teaching hospital in Livingston. Medical staff, from consultants to trainee nurses, use the library, as do social

workers and GPs from the West Lothian area. So the need for guiding help varies with users' experience and level of study.

As well as tracking down the latest article on doctors' hours for personnel or getting statistics on cat deaths, Miss Neil trains people to use the technology themselves. "I show them how to do a search or look up titles on Medline, a database on compact disc."

Searches can extend beyond home territory and Miss Neil has to weigh up the value in terms of potential usefulness to others. "I contact the medical library in Edinburgh because they supply free, or I check whether I can afford to buy. Failing that, the cost of getting it from the British Library is passed on to the borrower."

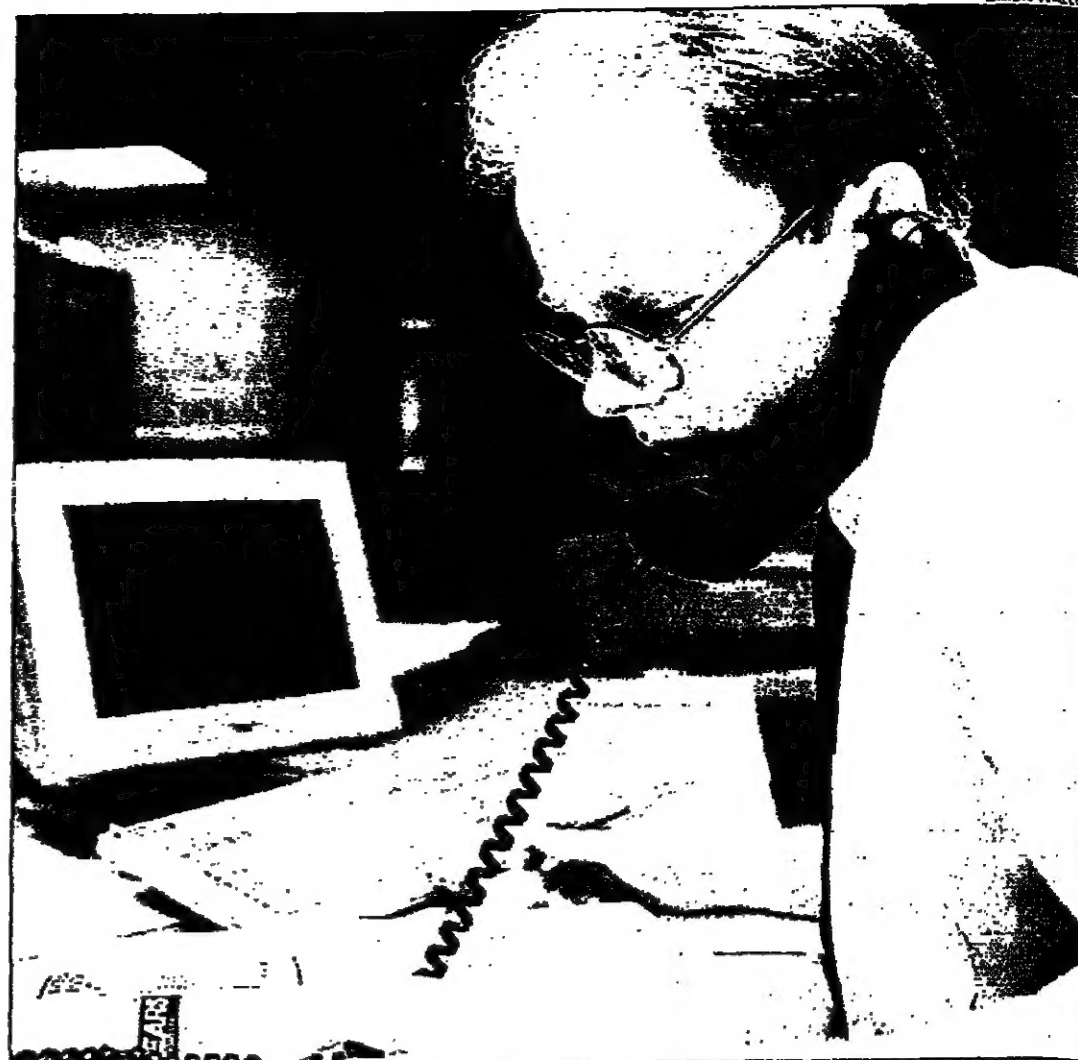
Whereas previously librarians tended to remain in their specialisation, there is more movement now between public library work and business or academic positions. Librarianship and information science comes under mutual acceptability arrangements with European Community countries. Within any library there can be a great variety. While studying at

Liverpool Polytechnic, Marilyn Moore, aged 25, had several placements — in a business information library and a local library to try out different types of work. She is now a young people's librarian in Waltham Forest, London, providing story-tellers, artefacts and books for under-fives, juniors and teenagers throughout the borough. "The outreach is very important," Miss Moore explains. "I talk to parents and childminders about the value of reading with children and show them the variety we have to lend. Yesterday, I went to a community centre to show Turkish parents children's books in their own language. We have some dual-language texts, too. They were surprised at how much we have to offer."

The job of librarian is definitely one for somebody who enjoys communicating with both adults and children. As a young librarian, Miss Moore is conscious of being in the forefront of change. "I was the only black student on my course," she says. "I was lucky because in my previous job my boss gave me a lot of encouragement to become qualified."

She believes that representing libraries with talks will give young people positive ideas about books — and a career as librarian.

Information: Library Association, Education department, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE; the Institute of Information Scientists, 44 Museum Street, London, WC1A 1LY



Facts at his fingertips: Mark Lardner, who is aged 31, in the Institute of Directors library

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